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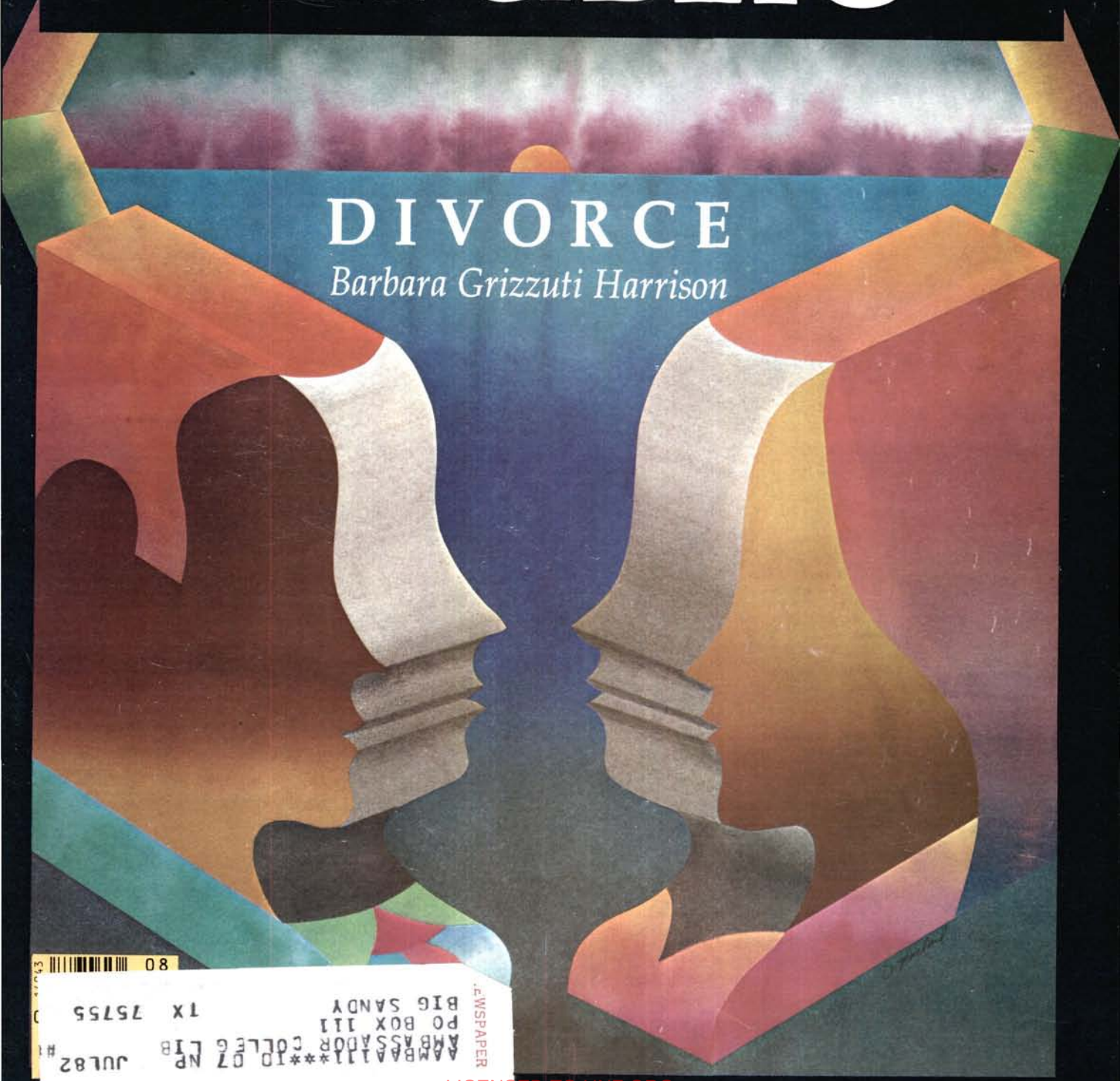
Kennedy's Tapes . . . and Nixon's, by Garry Wills

Czeslaw Milosz on Sex and Nakedness

THE NEW REPUBLIC



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CORRESPONDENCE

HAMMERING STEEL

To the editors:

Ronald Steel should take responsibility for his own views. He wishes to be counted among the opponents of the Polish repression, but he has made an analysis for which it is the lesser evil ("Poland and the Ghost of Yalta," TNR, January 27). "We have every right to denounce it," but he has provided a geopolitical case for it. He has argued that the success of Solidarity posed more of a danger than its failure. Jaruzelski can live with such a denunciation. With enemies like this, who needs friends?

According to Mr. Steel's letter (Correspondence, TNR, February 17), the Polish Army has saved NATO, prevented the Fourth Reich, and averted a nuclear holocaust. This last point requires comment. I am glad to be reminded that we live in an age of nuclear weapons. We lived in an age of nuclear weapons when despots like Baptista and Somoza were turned out by their peoples, but those revolutions were not vitiated in Mr. Steel's eyes, by this "fact of life." Perhaps Mr. Steel believes that the United States would not use nuclear weapons. Evidently he believes that the Soviet Union would. That is obvious. It was my impression that critics of the military program believed that the Soviet Union would not.

Mr. Steel's remark perfectly illustrates the way in which the fear of nuclear war may be used to excuse any projection of Soviet power. We are all afraid; but this is a version of the anti-nuclear argument that hobbles only the United States.

Mr. Steel has his "moral searchlight" and I have mine. They are cast in different directions. He should not pretend that there is no morality in his writing on politics; and if he is not pretending, he should not be proud.

Leon Wieseltier
Cambridge, Massachusetts

CRACKDOWN VS. REPRESSION

To the editors:

In your editorial "Notebook" (TNR, January 20), you criticized the use of the word "crackdown" to describe the current brutal repression in Poland. You say it is "a word otherwise routinely used to describe a hardening policy by legitimate authorities towards crime."

Your examples of common uses of the word, "crackdown on drug traffic" and "crackdown on prostitution," however, betray the appropriateness of its application to Poland: "crackdown" is often used to describe organized attempts to stop people from doing things that they say they should have a right to do—including organize workers' unions and vote in free elections. The police-state tactics employed in any such "crackdown" are always viewed as "legitimate" by the "authorities."

David Holtzman
Princeton, New Jersey

TRANSYLVANIA'S SPELL

To the editors:

I have been an avid and faithful reader of THE NEW REPUBLIC for more than 20 years. I have read many pieces on a variety of subjects in its pages during that time. None have provoked me to write until now.

John Lukacs's "In Darkest Transylvania" (TNR, February 3) is so startling, so unabashedly biased, so proud, and yet so plaintive that it stopped me dead in my tracks. I cannot get it out of my mind. All other thoughts and impressions I have of this "beautiful and . . . bitter end of Europe" have been eradicated at one stroke. Mr. Lukacs's is the vision that is with me now.

Brooke McMurray
New York, New York

PERRY MILLER REMEMBERED

To the editors:

In the fall of 1963, I was a graduate student in Perry Miller's course on Romanticism. The scene Ann Douglas describes ("The Mind of Perry Miller," TNR, February 3) of Miller's "small stroke" in class and his insistent completion of his thought before he dismissed us is one I have carried with me. What Douglas does not mention, however, is the sequence of events that preceded that memorable class.

On Tuesday, November 26, the day after John F. Kennedy's funeral, Miller came to class and delivered an impassioned lecture on the Kennedy assassination. We students sat spellbound and shaken as this giant of intellectual history spoke of destruction of civilization and kept repeating the phrase "destruction from within." It was on December 5, Thursday of the following week, that Miller suffered a stroke in class. By December 9 he was dead. Douglas's article led me to think once again about the link between Kennedy's assassination and Miller's death. To me, it has always seemed to be more than mere coincidence.

Karen Levin Coburn
Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri

MILITARY MIGHT

To the editors:

In "World in Crisis," TRB doesn't buy Reagan's case "that we've never gotten into a war because we were too strong." TRB cynically asks: " . . . what about Korea, what about Vietnam?" (TNR, February 3).

We certainly did not get into Korea because we were "too strong." On the contrary, six months after the end of World War II, General George C. Marshall told a Senate committee that—as a result of our drastic demobilization—we would have to remobilize if we needed to put as much as a single Army division into a hostile engagement. But the demobilization continued. The last remnants of the U.S. 8th Army were being withdrawn from Korea, and overall U.S. military strength was at a very low ebb, when North Korean units crossed the 38th Parallel on June 25, 1950. Truman's decision to fight definitely did not stem from Pentagon urging, and we had to remobilize in a hurry—primarily by using people and equipment left over from World War II.

How about Vietnam? When John F. Kennedy moved into the White House, the Army was down to about 965,000 people. JFK tried to build the Army to 1.2 million, largely by calling up reserves in the wake of the Berlin Wall crisis in August 1961. Then Kennedy discovered an ancient American truth: maintaining strong standing military forces—most particularly conventional forces—is not good politics. In JFK's final defense budget, the Army was scheduled to shrink back down to about 965,000. It was left to President Johnson to remobilize when, for whatever reasons but definitely not because we were "too strong," he decided to expand the war in Vietnam.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

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FROM WASHINGTON

The Mondale Candidacy

I got to wondering the other day whether Walter Mondale is running for President. So I asked him. He's an able and attractive person. "I'm obviously thinking about it," he said simply, "but it's too soon to say." Certainly he's running! His March calendar has eleven appearances in ten states. Mondale's not the only one, of course—all the hopefuls are running. The candidate selection process goes on quietly when most of us are looking the other way.

This is important in relation to Ronald Reagan. A lot of people are asking now about Reagan's economic theology, the Kemp-Roth gospel—balance the budget by cutting taxes. It's a little difficult to swallow at first (it took budget director David Stockman a couple of gulps). A projected deficit of over $90 billion and likely to be bigger still. Was that part of our political marriage compact with candidate Reagan?

Perhaps I am being unfair. Way back at the turn of the century, an English Ambassador to the U.S., James Bryce, titled a famous chapter about our election system: "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen President." In his time there were Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley. A depressing bunch. How does it compare with today's? We have had Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan. No President has lasted two terms since Ike. America periodically produces a Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson, Wilson, or Roosevelt—but not very often. One reason is that the characteristics that make a man a good candidate are not necessarily those that make him a good President. Reagan was a swell candidate. Running the country, however, is a different job. Lord Bryce said: "The ordinary American voter does not object to mediocrity. . . . He likes his candidate to be sensible, vigorous, and above all, what he calls 'magnetic,' and does not value, because he sees no need for, originality or profundity, a fine culture or a wide knowledge." Reagan's troubles with Congress, I suspect, are just beginning; they usually appear after the euphoria of the first year.

Another problem has been stated recently by Godfrey Hodgson as the paradox of the Presidency: "Never has so powerful a leader been so impotent as to what he wants to do, what he is pledged to do, what he is expected to do, and what he knows he must do." Scholars are familiar with the tendency to stalemate and deadlock in the American system, though it did not cause Reagan much trouble in his remarkable first year. But much of what he did in 1981 was just storing up problems for 1982.

I mentioned Mondale at the start. Does he have the stamina to stay the course? He tried for top place in 1976, when a lot of voters, his managers complained, thought that "Mondale" was a Los Angeles suburb. He and Carter got on just fine. "I don't believe there's ever been a President and a Vice President who have been bound together more closely," Carter said in 1977. They enjoyed each other. Carter had an anxious and detailed approach. Mondale was more direct and exuberant. He knew the ropes in Washington; Carter didn't. Mondale filled out the unexpired term of Hubert Humphrey in 1964 and won election to the Senate in his own right in 1966 and 1972.

As a putative candidate Mondale is headed right for that jungle of 37 Presidential primaries which he denounced when he tried it before. The public is only dimly aware of the three-year merchandising marathon now beginning which ultimately leads America to a President. Is Mondale willing to stay the course? His father was a Methodist minister; he graduated from the University of Minnesota *cum laude* and later took a law degree. His sympathies are with the disadvantaged, and in the Senate he made himself spokesman for the underdog—just the types injured by current Reagan programs. Housewives in a Washington suburb had their vegetables handled in the mixed produce department of a local supermarket by Teddy, the eldest of three Mondale children.

He shares the anxieties of other old-school Hubert Humphrey types that the gap between rich and poor is widening. There is lack of vision, too, he thinks. The Japanese, with half our population, are producing 50 percent more electronics engineers, he charges. The need for computer specialists is growing, but we are "graduating fewer doctorates in computer science than we did five years ago." His summary of discontent is low-keyed and not particularly original, but he has been saying for some time what others now proclaim in the new budget battle. He denounces "unwise tax cuts of three-quarter trillion dollars. It is a radical policy and it has failed."

There is currently widespread restiveness over American political institutions that takes different forms. Mondale published a book in 1975, advocating a radical step. "I believe we need a question-and-report period along the lines of parliamentary practice," he wrote. "I recently watched a question period during a session of the Canadian Parliament and came away even more convinced of the validity of the practice." Would Mondale, if elected, subject his Cabinet to this dramatic ordeal? In Canada's system, the Prime Minister is on call for questions from the opposition party across the aisle whenever Parliament meets. In Washington, President Reagan has answered unofficial questions by reporters only seven times since he took office.

When Mondale decided that he couldn't get the nomination from Jimmy Carter in 1976, he withdrew with a memorable statement: "Basically I found that I did not have the overwhelming desire to be President which is essential to the kind of campaign that is required. I do not think anyone should be President who is not willing to go through fire."

As the dreary primary race takes shape, I imagine that we will hear a lot more about Fritz Mondale. Practically every writer thinks the process should be simplified and reformed, but change is doubtful. It's the Rutherford B. Hayes derby. Mondale's own proposal is for half a dozen regional primaries, separated by a couple of weeks. Does he have the lonely patience to go through what American demands of its Presidential candidates—the ordeal of fire?

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
FEBRUARY 24, 1982

BACKING THE BUS

"This war we're in," Strom Thurmond once said, referring to the struggle over school segregation, "is basically a fight between the believers in a Supreme Being and the atheists." It is a cruel irony that Senator Thurmond now presides over the Judiciary Committee's deliberations on the question of busing. It is also an unhappy sign of the times. In the years since 1971, when the Supreme Court approved court-ordered busing of schoolchildren as a technique to achieve desegregation, the opponents of busing have been unrelenting. But until recently, they rarely extended their objections beyond the technique to the idea of desegregation itself. And in 1981, with Congress concentrating on the President's economic program, busing (as well as the other new right priorities, abortion and school prayer) received little attention. Now, under the tireless prodding of past and present friends of Jim Crow, the Senate has begun to act upon legislation that goes far beyond past efforts to curb busing for the purpose of desegregation. The year-long logjam on the busing issue was broken on February 4, when the Senate approved a rider attached to the Justice Authorization bill by Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, and J. Bennett Johnston, Democrat of Louisiana. The Helms-Johnston amendment and a series of bills now being proposed fall under the anti-busing rubric, but they go a great deal further. Not only would they outlaw transportation as a means of desegregation, they would also overturn virtually all desegregation plans now in effect, and would strip the federal judiciary of its power to enforce the Constitution in the area of school desegregation.

Of the three pieces of sweeping anti-desegregation legislation currently under consideration, the Helms-Johnston amendment is by far the closest to becoming law. It forbids the Justice Department from taking any action that might lead "directly or indirectly" to busing, and bars federal courts from ordering busing under almost any circumstances. It also includes language authorizing U.S. law enforcement officials to assist individuals and communities seeking "relief" from desegregation orders. The Supreme Court's decision in *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, which directed the executive branch to assist in the eradication of school segregation, is stood on its head: the federal government is now to be barred from working on the behalf of citizens seeking an end to unconstitutional segregation, but is to be authorized to represent anyone wanting to halt the progress of desegregation.

So far, the pro-desegregation forces in the Senate have been getting overwhelmed by the anti-busing fever. Helms and his cohorts twice invoked cloture to end filibusters led by Connecticut Republican maverick Lowell Weicker. The last chance for Senate liberals to block the amendment will come when the Senate considers the entire authorization bill in the spring. The House has appended to its version of the bill an amendment which places similar restrictions on federal officials. The differences between the House and Senate bills will be resolved in conference. In recent years, the Democratic House leadership has managed to frustrate the new right by keeping "social issue" legislation bottled up in committee. It will be a disturbing precedent if, as seems likely, some version of the Helms-Johnston amendment becomes law.

The Senate Judiciary Committee is also considering two bills exclusively concerned with school desegregation. The more odious one is the brainchild of North Carolina's other Republican Senator, John East. The East bill bluntly forbids the lower federal courts from

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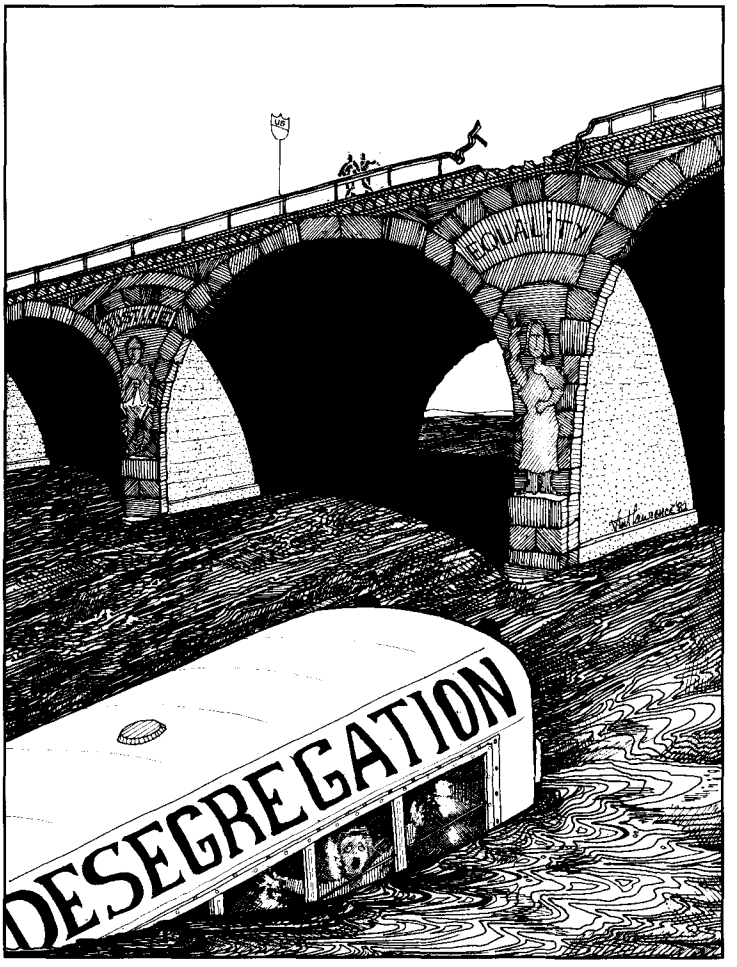
requiring race-conscious "assignment or transportation of any student," and commands that all busing injunctions currently in effect be dissolved upon the application of any affected state or local educational agency. The other bill, written by Utah Republican Orrin Hatch, is more subtle in its approach to legislative-judicial relations, but it would have the same effects as the East bill. All cases in which busing has been ruled necessary (it can only be ordered in the face of proof of deliberate discrimination) could be reopened. And even if a court found evidence of continued intentional segregation, the judge would be powerless to do much more than suggest that such unconstitutional mischief should come to a halt.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The constitutional validity of these assaults on the federal judiciary is highly questionable. As Helms and East tirelessly point out, the Constitution does give Congress the power to create the lower federal courts and, by inference, to limit their jurisdiction. And members of Congress are certainly entitled to their own views of the Constitution. (Some of them hold very strange views: Mr. Thurmond, for example, asserted in 1962 that in some cases the Pentagon has the duty to depose the President.) But the notion that Congress can use statutory law—ordinary legislation—to overrule the Supreme Court on matters of constitutional interpretation cannot be taken seriously. In the 1971 *Swann* v. *Charlotte-Mecklenburg* decision, the Court ruled that busing could be a valid and useful tool to remedy the invidious effects of unconstitutional segregation. And in another case that same year, *Swann* v. *North Carolina Board of Education*, the Court struck down a North Carolina law prohibiting race-conscious pupil assignments. These decisions (made 16 years after the Court had directed that dual school systems be dismantled "with all deliberate speed") do not constitute cases of "judicial activism." Nor were they directives to the lower federal courts to engage in "social engineering experiments," contrary to the shrill sloganeering of Mr. Helms and the rest of the "reformed" segregationists. The foot-dragging and outright resistance to desegregation (in 1964, only 2 percent of black schoolchildren in the Old South went to integrated schools) has made it eminently clear that requiring school assignments to be absolutely color-blind would, in the Court's words, "render illusory the promise of *Brown* [v. *Board of Education*]." A unanimous Court wrote in the second *Swann* case, "Just as the race of students must be considered in determining whether a Constitutional violation has occurred, so also must race be considered in formulating a remedy." Thus, by forbidding race-conscious pupil assignments for the purpose of desegregation, the Helms-Johnston rider and the East and Hatch bills directly contradict Supreme Court rulings, which are binding precedents. Congress cannot handcuff the courts in desegregation cases except by constitutional amendment, a process which the Founders properly designed to be arduous and unwieldy.

To be sure, busing has been far from an unmitigated success. It often undermines parental support for public education among both blacks and whites, and increases "white flight" from the city to the suburbs. But the arcane questions of whether busing is responsible for all or only some of white flight, and whether desegregation improves or downgrades the quality of education for whites and blacks are, in the end, peripheral. As a nation, we have a responsibility to eradicate intentional segregation, especially at this late stage. As the Supreme Court noted in *Brown* v. *Board of Education*, segregated education is inherently unequal, largely because it perpetuates a caste system based on race.

But as Helms, East, Hatch, & Co. surely understand, it is less busing that is at issue here than it is desegregation itself. Judges only hand down busing orders when local school authorities shirk their responsibility to come up with effective plans to remedy proven acts of deliberate segregation. Without the power to threaten to slap a busing order on a community, judges

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will be faced with the kinds of stalling tactics and endless resistance to gradual desegregation that were so widespread throughout the 1950s and 1960s. John Marshall's legal adage that "the right equals the remedy" means that when judges find evidence of violations of constitutional rights, they must try to restore the victims "to the position they would have occupied in the absence of the violation." Without the threat of busing—and, in some cases, the use of it—the vindication of constitutional rights will be but a sometime thing.

It is precisely because desegregation is at issue that people who reject school segregation must put an end to popular misconceptions that lie at the root of the anti-busing hysteria. The organized opponents of desegregation use every means at their disposal to exploit popular fears and hatreds. The patently racist rhetoric about desegregation damaging the quality of public education is unfounded. Research overwhelmingly indicates that blacks in a desegregated environment learn more than their segregated peers, and that white students do not suffer at all. Polls indicate that, largely due to the new right's harping on the "huge cost" of busing, the American public believes that busing for desegregation costs more than ten times as much as it really does: in fact, we spend only a fraction of 1 percent of our national education budget on busing for desegregation. And though Senator Helms likes to play on popular hysteria by citing the number of children who die in school bus accidents each year, he neglects to mention that more than half of the schoolchildren in this country ride buses to school, but less than 5 percent are transported for desegregation purposes. Many of the most rabid opponents of busing, including Senator Hatch, come from states where there is little or no busing. But people who have actual experience with busing no longer share his fears: in a 1981 Harris poll, over 80 percent of the parents of children who have been bused expressed satisfaction with it.

In spite of its apparent indifference to legislative efforts to curb busing, the Reagan Administration has made it clear that it will not pursue school desegregation with any enthusiasm. (Indeed, the head of the Justice Department's civil rights section, Bradford Reynolds, has made statements that seem to indicate a certain nostalgia for the old and, we thought, disreputed "separate but equal" doctrine.) Busing is not the answer to all the lingering problems from our segregated past. But it must continue to be made available to dismantle the dual school systems that were, until recently, widely maintained—not by chance, but by local authorities' determined efforts to keep black and white children apart. Many Senators who usually support strong civil rights action, like Joseph Biden of Delaware, feel compelled to support the anti-busing bills because opposition to busing is widespread in their states. It must be stressed to them that Congressional support for these bills will have implications far beyond the busing issue. Senator Helms has already introduced a series of bills on abortion and school prayer that also make restrictions of the courts the vehicle for wholesale renovations of the Constitution. Like it or not, to vote against busing now is to condone future recisions of unpopular constitutional rights.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE NEW REPUBLIC is pleased to announce the addition of three new contributing editors: C. Vann Woodward, Robert B. Reich, and William J. Quirk. Mr. Woodward is Sterling Professor Emeritus of History at Yale University. He is the author, most recently, of *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* and *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, and the editor of *Mary Chesnut's Civil War*. Mr. Reich, former director of policy planning at the Federal Trade Commission, teaches at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is the co-author of *Minding America's Business*, and is working on another book on the relationship between social justice and productivity. Mr. Quirk was a professor of tax law at the University of South Carolina and now practices in New York City.

□ WHEN VERMONT'S ANNUAL town meetings convene next month, over half of the state's 252 towns will vote on a resolution calling for a mutual freeze on nuclear arms by the United States and Soviet Union. Urban dwellers may be surprised to learn that a state that has heretofore professed indifference to the annihilation of the rest of the planet is suddenly drawn into the arms debate. One would think that the rock-ribbed inhabitants of those sleepy Green Mountain hamlets would be secretly pleased at the thought of Manhattan being turned to vapor. After all, that would mean fewer flatlanders in their midst each summer. But, as David McCauley of the American Friends Service Committee (Putney chapter) explained to the *New York Times*, the Federal Crisis Relocation Plan would bring thousands of city-dwelling New Englanders into the state if a nuclear blast were threatened. "Each Vermont town is asked to accept a certain number of people in that event," McCauley complained. This Quaker strategy of selling disarmament on the basis of mean-spirited provincialism is shrewdly appropriate not only for Vermont but also for the age of new federalism. Love thy neighbor, these God-fearing people instruct us, but don't cross state lines.

□ ARAB CAPITAL AVAILABLE is the headline on a mysterious advertisement appearing in magazines and newspapers around the country. "We have a list of potential clients from all over the Arab world who have shown

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interest in promoting, funding, buying and investing in all sorts of real estate projects, or any other worldwide profit-making venture in North America. We will send you this very select list for $190." An address follows for something called IAAIC in Beverly Hills. A twenty-minute investigation drawing upon the full resources of THE NEW REPUBLIC has revealed that IAAIC is short for International American-Arab Investment Corporation, a company headquartered in Luxembourg. When we reached the company's L.A. press rep through an answering service, he sounded weary and unconvincingly ingenuous. "We had cute wording on our ad," he said, "and everyone said 'Wow, what a great story!' " (Apparently TNR was beaten to the punch by CBS News and *Time*.) "That's just a catchy ad. Arabs are considered people who are going into venture capital investment." So why not say, VENTURE CAPITAL AVAILABLE? Because it doesn't convey the ugly message the ad wants to convey—that Arabs are particularly foolish with their money, and just waiting to be taken advantage of. Most, but not all, of the names on this cynical sucker list are Arab. So in addition to being anti-Semitic (in the less familiar sense of the term), the ad is misleading.

□ REQUIRED READING FOR RONALD REAGAN: "The moment we launch into conjectures about the usurpations of the federal government, we get into an unfathomable abyss and fairly put ourselves out of the reach of all reasoning. Imagination may range at pleasure till it gets bewildered amidst the labryinths of an enchanted castle, and know not on which side to turn to escape from apparitions which itself has raised." Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist Papers*, #31.

□ FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES's obituary of John Hay Whitney, February 9, 1982: "Mr. Whitney made his Manhattan home in a duplex on Beekman Place in recent years, closing a town house on East 63rd Street while subway construction was going on underneath.

"He also maintained a 500-acre estate and mansion, Greentree, in Manhasset; a spacious summer house on Fishers Island, off New London, Conn.; a 12-room place at Saratoga Springs, N.Y., for occupancy during the August race meeting there; a 15-room hideaway in the heart of 19,000 acres of bird country and cornfields at Greenwood, Ga.; a modest golf cottage at Augusta, Georgia; and a flat in London.

"He could also bunk at Greentree Stables, near Lexington, Ky, a 1,000-acre horse farm whose ownership he shared with his sister, the late Joan Whitney Payson, who was once the principal owner of the New York Mets baseball team.

"What really dazzled visitors to the 63rd Street town house was Mr. Whitney's art display. More than 55 items from his collection, among the finest in private hands, dotted the walls. These included two Rembrandts, two Michelangelos, three Picassos and a number of works by Vuillard, Monet, Cezanne, Degas, Manet, Toulouse-Lautrec, Renoir, Pissarro and Braque.

"In addition, there was a sizable collection of Matisses, Mr. Whitney's favorite modern artist, whose pictures traveled with him from house to house.

"Mr. Whitney was regarded by his associates as a thoughful person, not given to vulgar display or to flaunting his position."

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The beauty business goes on. A hundred unguents with a hundred promises. Liquids to grow hair—and salves to take hair away. Creams to make faces plump and tonics to reduce 'loose' skins. The business is built on one note—a searching by millions of women for a lost youth, an unattained beauty. And millions are spent, mostly in vain. So little can be done to restore a youth that is gone or to gain a beauty that never was. Facial surgery may be resorted to because of disfigurement or a great psychological or economic need. It is expensive, painful and usually temporary. Over the beauty business hangs the knowledge that old age will get you in the end. But women still continue to spend millions for gay bottles and pleasant treatments, for glamorous promises and flattery, for temporary escape and luxury. Perhaps it is a small enough price!" ("The Skin Food Skin Game" by Thyra Samter Winslow, February 24, 1932.)

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

REBELS OF THE RIGHT

THOSE LIBERALS and others who thought that Ronald Reagan was a true-blue conservative—from the time he fought the Communists in Hollywood right up until January 1981, when he began facing the realities of governing America—need to think again. Some members of the conservative movement say they understood at least as early as 1975 that there was a soft spot in Ronald Reagan's hard core. In June of that year, Reagan met at the Madison Hotel in Washington with five leaders of the movement—Howard Phillips, now national director of the Conservative Caucus; columnists Patrick Buchanan and Kevin Phillips; Paul Weyrich, president of Coalitions for America; and direct mail mogul Richard Viguerie—and uttered words that soon reverberated around the right wing of American politics. "I like to wear a white hat," Reagan said. According to one conservative leader, when word of this utterance got around, "none of us had any illusion that he would be our kind of President. We have great affection for Ronald Reagan,

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Acid rain.

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Right now, on the basis of incomplete and often frightening reports, people are proposing that legislation be enacted and drastic steps be taken to stop what they believe to be the cause of acid rain.

What is causing acid rain?

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NRE2

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but all of us realize that if you really want to turn America around, you have to get mud on your hat."

The conservative movement stuck by Reagan in 1976, supporting his challenges to Ford over the Panama Canal, detente, and Henry Kissinger. But the truest believers supported other candidates in 1980, notably John Connally, who has no aversion to mud on his hat, and Representative Phil Crane of Illinois.

After Reagan won the New Hampshire primary, he adopted a campaign strategy that some conservatives think may have doomed his presidency, or at least its ideological purity. He decided to take the advice of his pollster-strategist Richard Wirthlin and unite the Republican Party, or, as Howard Phillips puts it, "revive the Deweyite coalition of Main Street and Wall Street." The alternative favored by the right was to build "a new majority coalition" of conservative Republicans, conservative Democrats, single-issue ideologues, and foreign policy hardliners. The symbol of Reagan's shilly-shallying was his selection of "moderate" Republican George Bush as his running mate.

The conservative hard core thinks that Reagan's governmental strategy—radical as it seems to liberals—is disastrously gradualist. Some of its members think that Reagan should have tried to balance the federal budget immediately, in fiscal year 1982, and not wait until 1984. They would have had him do so by chopping even more ruthlessly at social spending, and vetoing anything passed by Congress that did not meet his specifications. Howard Phillips's Conservative Caucus wants Reagan to "end arms control," strip "private liberal activist 'non-profit corporations'" of their federal funding, and "restore the Monroe Doctrine" by blockading Cuba.

It's clear that Reagan can do practically nothing, short of tearing the country apart, to satisfy some on the right. The purest of the pure counsel other conservatives that they should get experience in this Administration so that they will be prepared to take high posts "when we get a chance to govern this country." There is some muttering that if things go on as they are

CARTOON BY POWELL

going with Reagan, he may be challenged from the right in 1984. By whom? In truth, there is no plausible horse.

Most members of the conservative movement do not go so far as to dream of toppling Reagan. They regard him as a conservative President. But many of them also regard him as a conservative who has been led astray. The right wing has become increasingly vocal, and increasingly critical of the Reagan Administration. On January 21, several dozen conservative leaders met in closed session at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington and issued a lengthy public manifesto expressing "deep concern about the present conduct and future prospects of the Administration."

THAT STATEMENT was issued in spite of Interior Secretary James Watt's searing indictment of the rightists' caviling. Watt said that the worst political wounds are those suffered "from your friends shooting you in the back." He accused the conservatives of "shooting the President in the back," and got a standing ovation. But the conservatives keep right on shooting anyway.

Another example was the banner headline in the January 30 issue of President Reagan's favorite publication, the weekly *Human Events*. The headline read HAIG MUST GO, and led to the President's third meeting with a group of right-wing leaders and commentators known as the Blair House Irregulars because they first met with Reagan as President-elect at the official guest residence in December 1980. Six conservative activists were invited back on February 1 for a meeting in the White House that lasted close to an hour and a half.

According to participants, Reagan began by telling his guests, including the two top editors of *Human Events*, Thomas Winter and Allyn Riskind, that he was still reading their publication but enjoying it less. He then launched into a defense of Haig, who was accused by *Human Events* of being "a pure detentist" who has aligned U.S. foreign policy with the views of Helmut Schmidt and the rulers of the People's Republic of China (as opposed to those of "Free China"), and of giving excessive aid to third world countries while underfunding anti-Communist rebels in Afghanistan and Angola. Reagan's defense was vigorous, according to those present, but short on substance.

The right's personnel complaints dominated much of the meeting. John Lofton, editor of *Conservative Digest*, and columnist M. Stanton Evans repeatedly took up the cudgels, complaining that longstanding Reaganites were not getting jobs in the Administration, or were leaving, and that important posts were going to non-Reagan Republicans, or even to Democrats. Presidential adviser Edwin Meese reportedly first asked for a definition of "Reaganite," and then challenged Lofton's examples. Lofton named Rich Bond, a former campaign aide to George Bush, who has just been appointed deputy director of the Republican

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National Committee. Meese defended the appointment, saying former White House political adviser Lyn Nofziger, a conservative, had signed off on it.

"Name one conservative who hasn't gotten a job," Meese said. Lofton replied that William Van Cleave, a superhawk defense analyst, had been denied the chairmanship of the General Advisory Committee of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Meese said Van Cleave had been disloyal to the President by objecting publicly to his decision to pare down the American MX missile force to 100 rockets. Lofton replied: "This room is filled with people who violate Ronald Reagan's most sacred beliefs. If a loyalty test were applied, you'd all be fired." Lofton produced a copy of that day's *Washington Post*, which carried a story by Lou Cannon on page 2 detailing how virtually all of Reagan's top advisers had urged that he raise taxes to reduce budget deficits. Meese lamely replied that no adviser was quoted directly to that effect. "I hope the President noticed," said one participant, "how Ed had to resort to lawyerizing and junior debating tactics to handle John."

Meese seems to have done most of the talking for the White House staff, which also was represented by chief of staff James Baker, deputy chief of staff Michael Deaver, and national security adviser William Clark. "Baker was smooth," said one of the conservatives. "As things were exploding about personnel, there—silent—sat the man under whom personnel operations sit. He's slick."

ACTUALLY, EVANS DID get under Baker's skin once. Asked for a list of non-Reaganites in high places in the White House, Evans began rattling off names: Richard Darman, a protégé of Elliot Richardson; David Gergen, a former Ford aide; and Kenneth Duberstein, White House Congressional liaison chief. Baker interrupted: "And Baker. Baker's on that list. Say Baker. It's me you're after, isn't it?" The right wingers are after Baker, in fact, because he was campaign manager for both Gerald Ford and George Bush, and now has considerable power in the Reagan White House.

It's not clear how seriously the White House takes the right wingers' complaints, or how much will be done about them. "It's not entirely unhealthy for us to have them out there complaining," said one aide. "It doesn't make life any easier for us, but the more they talk, the more responsible they make us seem. Politically, I'd say they aren't a plus, but they're not a strong minus."

The right-wing revolt did come up—but apparently not extensively—at a White House staff conference February 4 and 5 at Camp David. Eleven top White House officials attended, along with five "outsiders"—Special Trade Representative and former Republican chairman Bill Brock; political consultants Stuart Spencer, Richard Wirthlin, and Lyn Nofziger; and pollster Robert Teeter—and discussed second-year priorities for the Administration, including the 1982 elections. The session grew out of a weekly luncheon gathering, held Fridays at Blair House under Deaver's chairmanship, at which top Reagan aides discuss communications and scheduling issues. At Camp David's Laurel Lodge on February 5, the group of 16 (chaired by Baker) is said to have concluded that economics remains the White House's top priority issue for 1982—and will determine 1982 campaign tactics—but that foreign policy would have to get higher priority than in 1981.

There seems to have been no consensus reached at Camp David—or perhaps even attempted—about how to handle the conservatives. Some Reagan aides are irate that the purist conservatives, unwilling to join the Administration themselves, are attacking those who do serve. Others say there's little need to worry, because the rightists have no one else to support but Reagan. The dominant White House staff view seems to be that Reagan should not walk away from his conservative friends, but needs to build support in the country for his program, and therefore can't be seen as a pure ideologue. So Reagan and much of the Cabinet will appear at the 1982 Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington in late February. The Blair House Irregulars may get invited back for a visit next year, and some rightists may get jobs. But the first new appointment made after the February 1 meeting put Edwin Harper, No. 2 man in the Office of Management and Budget, into the chief domestic adviser's post just vacated by Martin Anderson, a conservative movement favorite. The right groaned, apparently unaware that Harper had supported Reagan in 1976 and 1980 and was Anderson's choice for the job.

Et tu, JFK?

THE KENNEDY TAPES

So, six did it; six very different men. What, then, can you tell from the mere fact of taping? What is the common denominator between a Nixon and a Kennedy, Truman and Johnson, Eisenhower and FDR?

But it is not enough to say that six "did it." Here the *scale* of the thing makes a qualitative difference. Roosevelt's taping was brief, experimental; part of it was press conferences, semi-public events. Truman's taping was even briefer, and semi-accidental. Eisenhower's taping came closest to official record-keeping. It yielded forty pages of summarizing transcripts; then the tapes were apparently destroyed. His is the only case where the use of tapes for a particular purpose was finally established; and the director of the Eisenhower

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Library tells me that Eisenhower informed people on the telephone that notes were being taken.

That leaves three serious tapers—not the company Kennedy's friends like to see him in. If he resembled Roosevelt or Truman, that would not be so bad. Even Eisenhower could be borne. But Johnson? And Nixon!

Nixon, unceasing in suspicion, taped everything—any slight edge against his omnipresent enemies was to be welcomed. It was another of those efforts at control of the human environment that destroyed his environment. The man who hired spies for vague if endless errands would have taped his tapes if that had occurred to him. But his constancy of suspicion led, paradoxically, to lapses of awareness. When the tape is on *all* the time, it is hard to remember that fact *every* time.

WHICH LEAVES US with two extensive tapers who activated the machine incident by incident. The Johnson tapes fill eight cartons; his library has not drawn up logs, nor determined the amount of time represented by those cartons. The fifty-year "seal" on them may, if no action is taken soon, lead to chemical deterioration that will make their contents unrecoverable—an outcome no doubt longed for by any who talked their way down, through sewers, to the level of Johnson anecdotes. Since so little is known, it is hard to determine Johnson's motives with any specificity. But if it is asked, "Was it in character for him to tape?" the answer is easy. The man who enjoyed observing the discomfiture at dialogue delivered from a toilet seat clearly enjoyed putting others on the spot. We have learned he liked the gossip from bugs and tapes served up by J. Edgar Hoover. Presumably he would enjoy his own tapes as much as he did Hoover's.

When Nixon's tapes were discovered, Camelot's relicts told us it was not "in character" for Kennedy to tape, even though the same people would probably have granted it was "like him" for Johnson to do so. Now that they know Kennedy did tape, they say it is in character after all—the character of an historian. But historical records can be made without secretly taping the unsuspecting—for a start, by openly taping the informed. Or by stenographic notes. Or by dictating "main points" just after the meeting. Secret taping gets more, and presumably that more explains the taping. Certainly we are willing to think so in Nixon's case, or in Johnson's. Why not in Kennedy's?

And Kennedy was *extraordinarily* secret about it. Not even Sorenson, called Kennedy's alter ego, knew about the system. Neither, apparently, did his youngest brother. And if not these two, then why, of all people, his wife? Is it in the character of an historian to tape his own wife? This begins to sound more like the manipulative Lyndon Johnson, the voyeur present at an event and simultaneously spying on it.

Is that in Kennedy's character? The evidence for thinking so comes, curiously, from Arthur Schlesinger, who said it was inconceivable that Kennedy would tape others without their knowledge. In *A Thousand Days* he describes a conversation of the transition period:

> On Wednesday night after the election he relaxed at dinner with several friends. The group fell into an animated discussion of what the President-elect should do first. One guest suggested that he fire J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, another that he fire Allen W. Dulles of the Central Intelligence Agency. Kennedy, listening with apparent interest, egged his friends on. When they opened their papers the next morning, they were therefore a little irritated to read a Kennedy announcement that Hoover and Dulles were staying in their jobs.

By withholding what he knew while "egging them on" Kennedy was simultaneously talking to them and spying on them, observing the situation from outside, recording reactions after planting a misconception (that the matter was still open, that his "apparent interest" was in a possible course of action). There was no conceivable motive for this but his own amusement.

Kennedy was known as a "tease." Like Johnson he enjoyed putting others on the spot, to assert control of a situation (tipping the board when "Red" Fay was winning a game from him). He gave others private names in a proprietary way, turning their normal nicknames into diminutives—"Jamey" for Jim, "Benjy" for Ben. Sorenson notes that even his brother was irritated that the President would not accede to his wish to be called Bob rather than Bobby. Petty matters, but indicative. Not, in themselves, the stuff of history; but not within the necessary role of an historian, either. In a White House where secret trysts were held, or in dealing with an FBI that had secrets about Kennedy's life, it might be useful to have one's own secret tapes.

NONE OF THIS precludes the more obvious use of the tapes for historical purposes—any more than those purposes excuse the lack of honor in spying on men while talking to them. But it is interesting that harsh conclusions about character are easily reached when Johnson or Nixon performed the dishonorable act, and the same conclusions are so fiercely resisted when Kennedy is involved. What was "inconceivable" before we knew about his tapes becomes inconsiderable now that we do, not a thing to pay much attention to. This reflects the strange emotional investment that many people have in the Kennedy myth. Several men I admire have told me, "If Kennedy did anything wrong, I do not want to know about it." Why is this, when the same people were avid to find out what Nixon was up to? What is being protected is not some political vision or principle of privacy. For many, defending Kennedy is protecting their own youth.

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They do not want to admit that they lived on illusion, that they hero-worshipped at an empty shrine. That would disturb their self-esteem. But such disciples should remember that Kennedy would have taped them, given the opportunity, as readily he did his own brother, his own wife.

GARRY WILLS

Garry Wills is Henry P. Luce Professor of American Culture at Northwestern University. Among his many books are *Nixon Agonistes, Inventing America,* and the forthcoming *The Kennedy Imprisonment.*

Stockman's numbing numbers.

A NO-BUDGE BUDGET

IF THE COUNTRY is to achieve a safe landing from the turbulence engulfing its economy and polity, there will have to be a serious national debate about national defense, Social Security, and the relations between Washington and the states and localities. President Reagan's budget raises all these issues. But its proposals are so dominated by a tyranny of numbers that the debate may never take place.

If David Stockman often talks like a hand-held calculating machine, it is because his job requires it. Given a simple continuation of existing programs and taxes, the Office of Management and Budget's projections of federal spending and taxing for fiscal 1982 (the current year), fiscal 1983 (the budget year), and beyond (the "out years") would yield, respectively, deficits of $101 billion, $146 billion, and higher. A huge deficit for 1982 can be dismissed truthfully as caused by the recession and blamed on Jimmy Carter and Paul Volcker (though the Carter-Volcker duo would then have to be given credit for lower inflation as well). But if the budget gap in the recovery years of 1983 and beyond keeps getting bigger, the blame would no longer be transferable, and the Reagan Administration would find itself committing political suicide. So the fiscal and political imperative was to find a way to show declining deficits after 1982. For the budget year 1983, the Administration settled on a $91.5-billion deficit, noting that in relation to GNP this is smaller than the deficits of the mid-1970s recovery period.

In going about the job of transforming a $146-billion deficit into an $91-billion one for 1983 (with even more heroic reductions in the out years), Stockman was subject to severe constraints. These included Reagan's firm commitment to 18 percent spending growth in defense (challenged by Stockman last summer, to no effect); the President's unwillingness to try again on limiting Social Security benefit increases (after last year's fiasco); and the cancerous growth of interest payments on the debt (which will go up at least 17 percent in 1983). Such constraints effectively put about 60 percent of federal spending beyond the reach of Stockman's ax. The sources of taxation amenable to the easiest and biggest increases—taxes on personal and business income—were also out of bounds, since the scheduled reductions in these taxes are the holy of holies of the President's Economic Recovery Plan. As for closing tax loopholes to raise revenues, for Reagan that is like taking sunlight away from a plant.

The upshot of all this is a long list of $43 billion in budget cuts and a short list of $13 billion in "revenue enhancers." No broad area of federal spending was spared the knife. The Administration proposed cuts in programs ranging from welfare and health to fish hatcheries, in grants to states, in transfers to persons, and in direct federal employment. In addition, the President's budget projects heavy weapons sales abroad, and, at home, sales and leases of virtually every kind of federal property from the seashore (oil leases in the outer continental shelf) to the mountains (timber sales on government land)—all of which count as a deduction from federal spending. And the old favorites of fraud, waste, and abuse get to save a billion dollars every year (and no one will ever know whether it really happened). There are a few nondefense winners in this proposal—e.g., nuclear research and "enterprise zones"—but virtually everything outside the sacrosanct areas of defense and Social Security is to contribute to the austerity.

Tax rises play virtually no role in the Administration's plan. Even such sin taxes as excises on alcohol and tobacco were left unenhanced. And on the few bold tax strokes—such as requiring withholding on dividends and interest—the Administration began to back down before the budget press run was over.

Given the constraints, federal spending had to be hacked and the hacking had to be concentrated. The result is not just the paring of some questionable government activities, but the total elimination of a substantial part of the domestic functions of the federal government. This is particularly true in the area of grants to state and local government, where the Administration proposes the second consecutive year of severe cuts. This is to be followed by a holding action (the New Federalism) and ultimately by the termination with extreme prejudice of federal aid (the New Federalism Realized).

Should all you NEW REPUBLIC-reading bond dealers put your faith in the Reagan budget proposal? That depends—first, on an assessment of the economy. The President's budget is based on a specific, and far from certain, economic scenario: a speedy end to the recession, followed by rapid growth, with inflation withered to less than 5 percent by 1984. Last year's rosy

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scenario ran up against the concrete wall of tight money. The wall is still there. There is a great risk that monetary policy will keep the economy in a state of high interest and low growth. If that happens, the budget plan will be rendered inoperative.

The second question is whether Congress will buy Reagan's program. Presidents propose budgets and Congress disposes of them—but maybe not this year.

In 1981 President Reagan forced Congress to consider his spending reductions in one massive bill, the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981, which was slapped together quickly, with scarcely any time for normal Congressional committee deliberation. The reconciliation process stepped on a great many Congressional toes and left a general feeling of "never again." Given this background, and given the complex and radical nature of the President's new budget proposals, it is unlikely that the Congressional committee structure can be sidestepped this time around. That will mean delay, and, with it, the taking of votes on key spending cuts ever closer to the November elections. In these circumstances the Administration will find it difficult to manage even the Republican-controlled Senate. The possibility arises of a stalemate, with the government running on stop-gap continuing resolutions as it did in late 1981.

IT WOULD BE A shame if the budget debate succumbed to the tyranny of numbers. The real issues are those treated as givens by the Administration. We sorely need a rational debate about defense—not about next year's defense spending, which is nearly immutable, but about long-term defense policy. Now that balanced budgets are in vogue only on the extreme left, we need to establish norms for the federal deficit and its relation to monetary policy. As for the New Federalism, paths to more sensible relationships between the national government and the states deserve to be explored, but not under the lash of artificially swapping federal and state dollars.

Most of all, in what appears to be an era of slower real economic growth, readjustments of our transfer payment and tax expenditure policy are imperative. But it is a delusion to consider these without opening up a discussion of Social Security and the deductibility of interest—not exactly the subjects that a legislator running for reelection before a confused electorate hungers to take on. The alternative—to complain about Reagan's insensitivity—is easier. But that alternative is to debate the budget on the President's terms, which, if it does not lead to stalemate, can only lead to some degree of acceptance of his plan. The Democrats face a truly Californian choice: earthquake or flood.

ROBERT W. HARTMAN

Robert W. Hartman is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.

THE GILDED AGE

THE THRIFT GIFT

REPORTERS LIKE to say that journalism is writing history as it happens. Sometimes that is so, but not always. Anyone who has spent time cranking through the microfilms of newspapers of fifty years ago will tell you that one of the biggest stories of the early 1930s never got into print. That was the bankruptcy of the nation's banks.

Thousands of banks in urban and rural America closed their doors and took the accumulated savings of half the population with them. Nary a word about it can be found in the papers of that era. From other sources we have descriptions of the depositors lined up in front of the doors of hundreds of banks, waiting to be let in so they could withdraw their money and sew it into their mattresses where it would have been safe, but descriptions of these scenes of middle-class hysteria and despair are simply not to be found in the public prints. The bank crash was not covered like other disasters. No vivid interviews of victims saying how it felt to lose every cent they owned. No stories about bankers explaining what went wrong. Nothing at all. The consensus at the time was that printing the news would make the news worse, would play into the hands of the Bolsheviki and cause more runs on banks which simply didn't have enough money to cover their depositors' accounts.

The 1982 news blackout concerning the hundreds of sinking savings and loan associations is not, like the one shielding the banks fifty years ago, complete. Accounts of up to $100,000 are insured by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, so that the millions with money in S&Ls aren't in the danger their grandparents were in of being financially totaled. Nevertheless, the situation is much more serious than the infrequent stories would suggest, and the steps being taken by the government to remedy imminent disaster will have very serious consequences.

The Federal Home Loan Bank Board has not seen fit to tell us exactly how bad the situation is, but has let it be known through the business press that about 200 savings and loan associations are now bankrupt. That is, if their depositors wanted to withdraw their money, they couldn't come up with the bread. There are another 300 that are borderline, and another 900 that are under the legal requirements for the amount of safety money they are supposed to keep in the till.

The reasons for the industry going on the rocks have been widely reported. The money S&Ls have lent for mortgages in the past does not bring in as much income as these institutions must pay if they want to attract new depositors or hold old ones. Old 8- or 9-percent mortgages can be sold, of course, but only at

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steep discounts, so that although a savings bank may have lent $30,000 on a house at 8 percent a few years ago, it would realize about 60 percent of the unpaid balance if it tried to raise cash by selling it. Thrift institutions, as S&Ls and savings banks are called by financial experts and other ironists, now own an astounding $353-billion in mortgages which pay less than 10 percent. That's more than half their assets. They are in the deepest trouble they've been in since the early 1930s.

To prevent a number of S&Ls from closing their doors, the Reagan Administration paid out, through FSLIC, about a billion dollars last year. It also made commitments to pay out billions more in future years by promising to pick up the losses on these sick mortgages as they came due. Following the principle that those who will bear the cost have the least right to know how much that may be, the Federal Home Loan Bank Board has not seen fit to tell us how large the damage is. Nor is it clear whether the Federal Reserve Board has also been spending money to save S&Ls.

This multibillion-dollar Reagan Administration salvage operation might, if you were unkind enough, be contrasted with the same Administration's attitude toward individuals who are drowning financially. This, the great communicator told an audience of New York millionaires, is how destitute people, as opposed to destitute banks, should be helped:

> In California, a local charity group called Gleaners Statewide, salvages food and distributes it to the elderly and needy. Its members work docks and canneries, picking up unused but edible vegetables and fruits. . . . Another California group . . . works in fields and orchards salvaging acres of product that would be left unpicked or lying on the ground to rot. . . . Their leader . . . [says] that with a little support from business, we could lick the hunger problem in this country and maybe the entire world. Don't tell me we can't cope with our problems.

Our relentlessly optimistic President should have asked David Rockefeller and the other charity-minded types in the Waldorf Astoria's grand ballroom to walk the streets of their city gleaning pennies and nickels to be distributed to truly needy banks. For the individual there is to be the rebirth of the soup kitchen and the chancy charity of Reaganite voluntarism; for the stricken financial institution, the more certain and generous assistance of the federal treasury.

WHATEVER ELSE MAY or may not be gleaned from field and street, one can easily draw a parallel between the crocheting of safety nets in the White House now and the webs once woven by Reagan's political totem, Herbert Hoover. It was Hoover who hatched the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which got the government into the business of lending (although it was more like giving) banks money with which to save themselves. And it was Hoover who, like Reagan now, would permit federal help to wounded corporations even as he resisted any succor for people.

Hoover also believed the truly needy should be taken care of. In his case, that turned out to be Charlie Dawes, Calvin Coolidge's George Bush, whom Hoover appointed president of the RFC. In June of 1932 Dawes went home to Chicago to be boss of the Central Republic Bank and a few weeks thereafter the RFC loaned the bank $90 million. When and if we ever get a complete list of which banks and bankers the Reaganites are handing out money to, you may be sure that many will have ties to the Administration at least as close as those of Charlie Dawes.

BEYOND THE SECRETIVENESS about who the beneficiaries are and what the terms of their government-given benefits, this largesse is being dispensed in such a way that the banking system is being remodeled. The Reagan Administration is using the billions it is pumping into the thrift industry to turn it from a peculiarly local business into what amounts to national branch banking. In 1981 the government subsidized the creation of no fewer than five huge interstate savings and loan corporations.

In September, for instance, we saw Citizens Savings of San Francisco gobble up, with the government underwriting any possible losses, West Side Federal in New York City and Washington Savings and Loan in Miami Beach. In January Los Angeles's Home Savings and Loan of America got, again with federal help, five institutions in Texas and another in Illinois. In a separate deal Home picked up yet another Florida institution, plus several more in Missouri.

Thus the coast-to-coast savings and loan chain is being born. More will come into existence if the Federal Reserve Board helps bank holding companies to start picking up sick thrift institutions around the country. The Fed's chairman, Paul Volcker, has indicated that this is what he will do, although for generations the spirit of federal legislation has been to forbid interstate banking out of fear of excessive centralization of the money- and credit-power at the top of a few skyscrapers in Manhattan. This is but the most recent in a series of events that are rapidly changing the structure of American finance into a small group of national banking giants, retaining the same sensibilities to local tastes, desires, and controls as Safeway, K-Mart, and Sears, Roebuck do.

Of all our banking institutions, none have histories more rooted in the community than savings and loans.

COMING:

Strom Thurmond's Roots.

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More often than not, they are organizations put together by neighborhood people saving money to buy homes of their own. Even now they keep much of that character and provide the money and credit to render the values of home and hearth into being.

As much as any industry, the thrifts have been wrecked by inflation and the surges in interest rate that have followed. S&Ls probably lost $6 billion last year, and that figure may represent some overly kind accounting methods. Things are in a bad way. The S&Ls must have help. Giving them help probably will be cheaper, and it certainly will be less disruptive, than letting them go plop and then having the government pay off the long lines of depositors.

But should this distress be used as a chance to shape government aid into a lever to redesign and centralize the banking system? There is no legislative mandate for switching over to a banking structure Americans have abhorred and feared since Andrew Jackson's time. In fact, the policy being carried out now is barely legal, and it is unnerving that it is being done in stealth, without debate or public notification, except shy articles in the business pages. The power to give or withhold credit is everything, and to put it in the hands of perhaps twenty or thirty banking corporations has drearier implications for individual rights than all the wire-tapping and black-bag jobbing the FBI and CIA have done in the past twenty years. They don't have to read your mail if they control your access to credit.

Many ways can be devised to save the S&Ls without demolishing locally controlled banking. But as for rescuing banks while turning the lame, the blind, and the jobless into the scavenging bag persons of Ronald Reagan's voluntarism, we might quote New York's former Senator Robert F. Wagner. Discussing Herbert Hoover and the RFC, he said, "We shall help the financial institutions and I agree we should. But is there any reason we should not likewise extend a helping hand to that forlorn American . . . who has been without wages since 1929? Must he alone carry the cross of individual responsibility?"

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

Strategic and nuclear myopia in South Asia.

OVERBOARD WITH GENERAL ZIA

BY ROBERT A. MANNING

THE INK WAS barely dry on the Foreign Aid Authorization Act when Amnesty International released a report that calls into question the qualifications of one of the act's major beneficiaries, the regime of General Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan, to be a standard-bearer for freedom against Soviet expansionism. Amnesty charged the military dictatorship with increased use of torture and mass arrests over the past year, resulting in a "steady deterioration of respect for human rights." Stephen Solarz, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, thinks the Administration "has gone overboard" in its effort to bolster General Zia. Similarly, a worried senior Congressional foreign affairs staffer puts his qualms about the burgeoning U.S. alliance with Pakistan this way: "It's as if they [Pakistan] saw this drunken Uncle Sam staggering down the street and said, 'Let's roll him.' "

With far less scrutiny and public debate than attended the controversial Awacs package deal with Saudi Arabia, the Reagan Administration has convinced Congress to pass its $3.2-billion military and economic aid program for Pakistan, one of Riyadh's chief Islamic allies. The Administration contends that the aid package will help make Pakistan stable, and will ease tensions in the region as a whole. But the sale of a fleet of 40 sophisticated F-16s is likely to have precisely the opposite effect. It will fuel the long-standing Indo-Pakistan rivalry, and will further debilitate already weakening U.S.-Indian relations. It is already producing a new regional arms race that may lead to a nuclear showdown. Moreover, Reagan's embrace of Pakistan's military dictatorship may set off anti-American sentiments in both India and Pakistan and may increase Soviet opportunities to expand their influence in the region.

In its zeal to respond to the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and enhance U.S. military capabilities in the Persian Gulf area, the Administration has seriously miscalculated the situation. By viewing Pakistan in the context of Secretary of State Alexander Haig's would-be "strategic consensus" and misreading the regional

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dynamics of South Asia, the Reaganauts have given away the store to Zia with only vague hopes that Pakistan will act as a "frontline state against Soviet aggression." Pakistan and the U.S. have very different reasons for this new bond.

For the Administration, Pakistan is a vital link in a chain of bilateral security relationships that Washington has cultivated with nations like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the Sudan in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution and the invasion of Afghanistan. Pakistan is seen as particularly vulnerable to Moscow in its relentless quest for warm-water ports and the West's oil supplies. According to James Buckley, Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science, and Technology, the Administration's intention is "to keep the Soviets from thinking they can coerce and subvert Pakistan with impunity, raise the cost of potential aggression, and demonstrate that a strong security relationship exists between the U.S. and Pakistan which the Soviet Union must take into account in its calculations."

IN WOOING General Zia, the Administration seeks to "restore a relationship of trust" with Islamabad in the hope, as one official, puts it, that "various forms of strategic cooperation will prove possible in the Persian Gulf area." The Pentagon's goal is the use of Pakistani ports and airfields for the Rapid Deployment Force. The security relationship that is unfolding with Pakistan was first outlined in a 1980 Rand Corporation study by Francis Fukuyama, who is now on the State Department policy planning staff. Fukuyama wrote: "Pakistan could serve as an extremely important entrepôt for an RDF moving into the Persian Gulf from the east, i.e., from Diego Garcia or the Philippines.... Furthermore, there is the possibility that the Pakistani army could serve as a proxy force fighting in the Persian Gulf." Other military strategists have suggested eventually establishing a U.S. Navy port at Gwadar in Baluchistan, and restoring U.S. electronic intelligence facilities at Peshawar to monitor the Soviet Union.

After the deaths of the Shah and Anwar Sadat, this urge to revert to a 1950s Dullesian network of alliances is understandable. But such military-strategic cooperation between Washington and Islamabad is highly unlikely in the world of the 1980s. Pakistan is a nonaligned, Islamic country confronting third world nationalist and domestic pressures that could make it extremely damaging for the already unpopular Zia to be seen as a U.S. vassal. The 1979 Islamic riots, resulting in the burning of the U.S. Embassy, can be seen as testimony to popular sentiment in Pakistan. U.S. officials quietly say that Zia and others in the Pakistani military elite have hinted that such cooperation will be possible in the future, after a climate of trust is established. The U.S. Navy reportedly is already making unpublicized port calls at Karachi Harbor, but this is nothing more than a symbolic action. It would take a genuine emergency, such as a Soviet march into Iran, for the cunning Zia to consider real military cooperation.

Otherwise, Pakistani leaders have repeatedly emphasized, any such relationship is impossible. At a June 30 seminar in Lahore, Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Aga Shahi, said bluntly: "There is no quid pro quo. Pakistan will not give any bases or similiar facilities. Pakistan will not enter any regional consensus or regional alliance because there is no political basis for such an alliance." Shahi went on to reaffirm Pakistan's support for the cause of Palestine and the Iranian revolution, explaining that "no Arab country will become part of a strategic consensus promoted by the U.S." because "they consider the Israeli menace a greater threat to them than any other kind of threat."

Although the Reagan Administration justified military aid to Pakistan on the basis of the "Soviet threat," Pakistan's prime concern is not the Soviet Union (and certainly not Israel). It is India. Zia is also seriously concerned about the presence of some 100,000 Soviet troops across the border in Afghanistan, the frequent border incursions, and the hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees. But the bulk of Pakistan's army and military infrastructure is near the Indian border, and Islamabad has yet to move a single division of troops to the Afghan border. Zia believes that the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to extend its security perimeter and save an allied Marxist regime from collapse (a view held by many Western analysts as well). He perceives India—with which Pakistan has gone to war three times in the past 35 years—as the country's top security problem. A senior U.S. official acknowledged to me that, despite the Administration's public gesturings, India poses a direct threat to Pakistan, but that a strong and independent Pakistan is in itself a central U.S. concern.

BUT PAKISTAN's stability is endangered even more by the internal troubles posed by ethnic separatism. One of Zia's great fears is Indo-Soviet collusion in the Balkanization of the country. Pakistan is an ethnic crazy quilt that emerged as a political entity after bloody Hindu-Moslem riots in 1947. The Zia-led military is overwhelmingly Punjabi, and there are varying degrees of tension with the Pushtus, the Sindhis (who provided Bhutto his strongest support), and, most significantly, the Baluchis—minorities which together comprise some 40 percent of Pakistan's population and occupy about 72 percent of its land area. By identifying with the Zia regime (i.e., with Punjabis), the Administration may trigger resentment among these minorities, which would undoubtedly be prominent in any upheaval against Zia. Baluch nationalism led to a bloody civil conflict in the mid-1970s, and the Baluchis remember that U.S.-supplied weapons were turned on them during the fighting. The dynamics of Baluch nationalism and the potential for

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Soviet meddling have been explored by Selig Harrison in his recent book, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*. Harrison says the Baluch situation is quiet for the moment, but that Soviet adventurism is a possibility if the situation heats up. In the past, India has considered supporting ethnic separatists in Pakistan, but now fears that the Balkanization of Pakistan would lead to regional chaos and intervention by the Soviet Union, the U.S., and China.

Although Indo-Soviet collusion is not a major threat, India's fears of encirclement have been heightened by the unfolding U.S.-Pakistan alliance. In its myopic fixation on the Persion Gulf, the Administration has underestimated India's reaction to the sale of the F-16s. India does not fear an all-out conflict with Pakistan, which it overwhelms militarily, industrially, and technologically. But in the wake of the U.S. decision to provide military aid to Peking, India is uneasy about the prospect of strengthened ties among the U.S., Pakistan, and China. The F-16s—for which India has no equivalent—will give Pakistan's military junta new opportunities for troublemaking. Furthermore, it was the F-16 which aided Israel in successfully bombing Iraq's nuclear reactor, and India is well aware it could be used to destroy its own nuclear or industrial facilities. New Delhi fears a limited Pakistani military adventure—perhaps involving the disputed Kashmir border, which caused the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war.

This concern over a tripartite U.S.-backed alliance has strengthened hardliners in India who advocate stronger ties with the Soviet Union and those who propose developing nuclear weapons. In 1954, after Washington embarked on an aid program to Pakistan, President Eisenhower sent a letter to Prime Minister Nehru pledging that U.S. weapons would not be allowed to be used against India. And the U.S. made good that pledge, cutting off aid during the 1965 India-Pakistan conflict. In 1981 the Reagan Administration has given no such assurances to Indira Gandhi that U.S.-supplied weapons to Pakistan will not be used against India. The Administration appears distrustful of India, which it views as militarily dependent on the Soviet Union and all but locked into its ties to Moscow because of the geopolitics of the region. Such views are reinforced by India's multibillion-dollar arms deal with the Soviet Union, its recognition of the Vietnam-backed regime in Kampuchea, and its support for a Soviet-backed political settlement in Afghanistan.

BUT THERE IS nothing inevitable about ties between India and the Soviet Union. India has been trying to diversify its military suppliers (it turned to France for Mirage 2000 jets after the F-16 sale to Pakistan) and the U.S. has been one of India's largest trading partners for many years. India is an emerging power in its own right and does not want to be seen as a Soviet client. It is among the ten largest industrial powers, with a sophisticated manufacturing sector, one of the world's most advanced nuclear establishments, and its own regional ambitions. Since World War II, the U.S. has leaned toward Pakistan and China, while India has tilted toward Moscow. In coming years, India will undoubtedly be a key middle power, and a clear U.S. acknowledgment of this would gradually wean India, the world's largest democracy, away from Moscow. U.S. interests would be best served by a farsighted diplomacy favoring India's preeminence in South Asia and keeping a distance from the Indo-Pakistan rivalry. India has a view of the region that amounts to a sort of Monroe Doctrine, perceiving Pakistan's military buildup as disproportionate to its proper subordinate role in the region.

Thus India, until recently, has spurned Pakistani olive branches—proposals for a nonaggression pact and mutual force reductions—as disingenuous ploys by Zia. Many Indian officials and intellectuals view a stable Pakistan as a way of curbing Soviet influence in South Asia, and some have advocated a common Indo-Pakistan stance toward the Soviet presence in Afghanistan as something that might facilitate a political solution of the crisis. The talks between India and Pakistan that ended earlier this month are an encouraging sign that both sides are aware of the dangers of continuing hostilities. But the dialogue did not include most of the substantive issues, such as the Kashmir border dispute and differing views on Afghanistan.

THE TALKS are scheduled to continue in early March. If the two countries fail to come to terms with the fundamentals of their disputes, the most chilling aspect of the Indo-Pakistan rivalry will be renewed. Nuclear analysts agree that the most likely scenario for nuclear conflict is between India and Pakistan. Since exploding its "peaceful nuclear device" in 1974, India has refrained from building an actual nuclear arsenal. But there is no doubt that it could build a nuclear weapon within a few weeks if it decided to do so. Moreover, it has a rocket delivery system. And Pakistan has relentlessly pursued its own clandestine nuclear program (see sidebar on page 19), one so secretive that there isn't even a line item in the budget for it. U.S. officials estimate that Pakistan is spending $50 million a year on its nuclear program.

The Reagan Administration says that concern over Pakistan going nuclear is another argument for a security assistance program that will give the U.S. leverage to deter Islamabad from exploding a device. Few dispute the Administration's assertion that Carter's approach didn't work—the Carter Administration invoked the Symington Amendment (which cuts off aid to countries acquiring nuclear capability) in 1979 after evidence emerged that Pakistan was clandestinely building reprocessing facilities. But later that year the Administration reversed itself with a $400-million aid offer to Islamabad after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, indicating that geopolitical considerations

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supercede nonproliferation concerns in foreign policy.

Pakistan may represent a crucial test of Reagan's nonproliferation policy, which differs significantly from his predecessors'. Both Ford and Carter made the denial of sophisticated nuclear technology central to their nonproliferation policies. Reagan is an unabashed advocate of nuclear power. He favors breeder technology and is less concerned about countries acquiring nuclear enrichment and reprocessing facilities that could produce weapons-grade fission material. Although the Administration objects in principle to the transfer of sensitive nuclear technology, its nonproliferation posture, as outlined by Reagan's policy statement last July, is based on the assumption that, with the technology readily available to a country with the money and the will, the damage is already done. Reagan says that although denying nuclear capability to potential proliferators may slow them down, addressing their motives is the key to preventing proliferation. "In the final analysis," Reagan explained, "the success of our efforts depends on our ability to improve regional and global stability and reduce those motivations that can drive countries toward nuclear explosives."

In the two cases in which the U.S. has used its leverage to deter potential proliferators from acquiring reprocessing facilities—South Korea and Taiwan—Washington has had a special relationship with the countries (not to mention 40,000 troops in Korea), which it lacks with Pakistan. In each case, the country lacked a rivalry as intense as that between Pakistan and India. The Administration is aware of the risks. As one official told me, "Yes, we're taking a chance. We hope they won't do it; we expect some kind of defer-

Pakistan Goes Nuclear

Pakistan has been devilishly clever and bold in circumventing restrictions designed to stifle its nuclear ambitions. Although it has only one operating power reactor near Karachi, it is building two reprocessing facilities and a uranium enrichment plant that are likely to be used to create weapons-grade fissile material. This is the view of the State Department. A leaked cable in June stated: "We have strong reason to believe that Pakistan is seeking to develop a nuclear explosive capability. . . . We also have information that Pakistan is conducting a program for the design and development of the triggering package for nuclear explosive devices."

Pakistan has set up a global network of purchasing agents and dummy front companies through which they purchase sensitive nuclear equipment and skirt restrictions imposed by nuclear suppliers. The following are some examples of proliferation-related developments over the past year or so:

—In December 1980, Canadian officials arrested a group—including a Pakistani émigré—that was illegally exporting electrical equipment used in the centrifuge process of uranium enrichment. Ten previous shipments slipped by Canadian officials.

—Last September it was disclosed that Pakistan has begun to use domestically produced fuel for their 137-megawatt power reactor. Since the Pakistani-fabricated fuel has been used in the Canadian-supplied reactor, it is all but impossible for the International Atomic Energy Agency to accurately account for the fuel at the reactor. Pakistan's secret reprocessing facility is closed to international inspection, and the IAEA cannot verify whether Pakistani-fabricated nuclear fuel or Canadian-supplied fuel is being diverted for use in the United States. Intelligence officials and IAEA inspectors have begun to investigate what they term "suspicious activities" at the reactor site. These include a high rate of surveillance equipment failure and problems in accounting for spent fuel that could be used to produce weapons-grade plutonium.

—In recent months Pakistan has sought to secretly purchase highly sensitive diagnostic coaxial cable from U.S. and European suppliers. The cable is used for monitoring underground nuclear tests and runs from a test shaft to a monitoring center a safe distance away. U.S. officials confirm that Pakistan has dug a hole in the Chagi Hill mountains near the Afghan border, that could be used for this purpose.

—As James Buckley was being deployed on the Hill to sell the Pakistan military aid package to Congress, the Pakistanis were caught trying to smuggle a rare metal, zirconium (used in nuclear reactors to make the tubes that hold uranium fuel), out of the U.S. The Zia regime purchased the zirconium through a trading company headed by a retired Pakistani colonel who is a close friend of Zia. The shipment was intercepted last October at JFK Airport as it was being loaded on to a government-owned Pakistani Airlines plane. The exporter, Albert Goldberg of National Tronics, had not applied for an export license. Zirconium is on a list of controlled commodities, and Pakistan is prohibited from importing it. A Senate staffer involved in nonproliferation legislation told me, "The Pakistanis think they can thumb their nose at us because of Afghanistan."

—A State Department secret cable leaked in June said that Pakistan "is seeking to develop a nuclear explosive capability" and that "a covert purchasing organization" of Turkish companies known to the U.S., Turkey, and Pakistan governments was purchasing American-made electrical equipment and diverting it to Pakistan's nuclear program.

Neither India nor Pakistan has signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. As tensions mount in the region, increasing the possibility for a nuclear conflict or preemptive strike by one country against the other's nuclear facilities, the Administration should try to use its leverage to press Islamabad into strengthening international safeguards on secretive enrichment and reprocessing facilities.

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ence in respect to our conventional military relationship."

But as recent developments illustrate, there is little evidence that Pakistan will be dissuaded. Under Secretary Buckley says Zia has assured him that Pakistan will not acquire nuclear weapons or transfer sensitive nuclear technology to a third country. And as U.S. officials rightly say, reports of an "Islamic bomb" are greatly exaggerated. Though Libya's Colonel Qaddafi apparently did put some money into Pakistan's nuclear program, Qaddafi's hope of acquiring nuclear technology from Pakistan has faded. Libya-Pakistan ties have soured as Zia moved closer to Saudi Arabia. Nonetheless, Buckley concedes that Zia refuses to rule out a "peaceful nuclear explosion." The U.S. makes no distinction between peaceful and nonpeaceful explosions.

FACED WITH THIS dilemma, the Administration had to work around the Symington Amendment to get the $3.2-billion aid package through Congress. After lengthy wrangling on the Hill, legislation was approved that exempts Pakistan from the restriction of the Symington Amendment for the length of the aid package (Reagan, as part of his effort to restore the "imperial presidency," requested the repeal of the Symington Amendment). In a sense the new legislation strengthens nonproliferation policy. It forbids the transfer or receipt of reprocessing facilities or enrichment technology to a nonnuclear state that lacks safeguards procedures, and it permits Congress to override the President by concurrent resolution if he tries to waive an aid cutoff. Moreover, in the event that a nuclear device is received or detonated by a nonnuclear state, all economic and military aid—including aid approved but not yet delivered—would be suspended. If the President certifies that such suspension would be detrimental to the U.S. (Buckley stops just short of saying that a Pakistani nuclear test would mean a certain aid cutoff), he could delay it for 30 days of a continuous session of Congress. But after that Congress would have to pass a joint resolution in support of the President to continue aid.

The new bill ensures that Pakistan's nuclear program will remain under scrutiny, and it tells Zia that the Reagan Administration would have enormous difficulty keeping aid flowing to Islamabad if it explodes a nuclear device. However, the Pakistanis conceivably could explode a device in such a way that it couldn't be proven that they were responsible. To this day, the source of the "mystery flash" off the coast of South Africa in September 1979, which the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and many other analysts believe was a clandestine nuclear blast, remains a mystery.

In Reagan's single-minded pursuit of an anti-Soviet global strategy, he fails to take account of South Asia's regional dynamics and to learn from the mistakes of past U.S. policy in the area. The simple fact is that the mutuality of interests between the U.S. and Pakistan is limited—as is that between the Soviet Union and India. Pakistan's need for aid and an enhanced strategic position in the aftermath of the invasion of Afghanistan is where the interests of Washington and Islamabad intersect, but the Administration's interest stems from concern about stability in the Persian Gulf, and Pakistan's from concern about India. The Administration would do well to recognize the limits of that mutuality and balance its policy by using diplomatic leverage to facilitate Indo-Pakistan detente. By going ahead with the aid package without extracting any hard commitment from Zia, the Administration has squandered significant leverage already. But there are some hopeful signs. The renewal of dialogue between India and China over its border dispute underscores India's fears of turbulence in the region and of too tight a Russian bear hug.

The Administration should also heed Congress's preamble to the Pakistan aid section of the Foreign Assistance Act which, though symbolic, sends a message to Zia by emphasizing that the aid is intended "to benefit the people of Pakistan" and to help "expedite a restoration of full civil liberties and representative government." Though Zia clearly is not about to restore the democratic process in Pakistan, by distancing itself from Zia's one-man rule, the Administration can emphasize that the U.S. interest and commitment is to a stable and independent Pakistan—not to a military regime. In fact, the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy, a coalition of eight outlawed Pakistani opposition groups—most of which do not oppose U.S. aid—recently called on the U.S. to lead the West in pressing for free elections, comparing the martial law situation in Pakistan to that of Poland.

ZIA'S RECENT appointment of a handpicked, 288-member assembly with advisory powers was a cosmetic reform aimed at deflecting critics and polishing his image in the international community. It was opposed by all opposition parties. Although most observers are more wary of Zia's intentions than is the Reagan Administration, few dispute that Pakistan needs both military and economic aid. But most analysts agree that this aid should be tailored to fostering both internal and regional stability, which the Reagan Administration's package is not. The first six F-16s will be delivered within the year, and will be paid for in cash with Saudi petrodollars. But the rest, including thirty-four F-16s, is spread out over several years. Congress should closely monitor events in South Asia and pressure the Administration to use what leverage the U.S. has to encourage Indo-Pakistan detente, and, in Pakistan, progress toward democracy and human rights. If the desired results are not attained, Congress should alter the aid package by halting deliveries of the F-16s.

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Dear Foreign Government:
Are you insecure? Unstable? Envious of your better-armed neighbors? Saddled with a discontented officer class? If you said "yes" to any of these questions, then U.S. arms sales may be the answer for you. Yet many countries, we know, still wonder how—or even whether—they can join the U.S. arms sales family. That's why our sales staff has compiled this list of questions they're most often asked—often by governments just like yours.

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Q: *Many people in my country are starving—how will weapons help them?*

A: Darn fine question. First, even starving people need the protection against foreign intruders which our weapons offer. Second, your average hungry person is often a malcontent, ready to clamor for food the minute you let him open his mouth. If you're like most countries, then you know how this can disrupt your economy and threaten the investments you and your friends have made. Weapons can help "cool down" these domestic disruptions, thereby keeping your economy on track—the best way to benefit your poor. You don't have to be a supply sider to know that when it rains on the roof of your Mercedes, the water trickles down to the ground. That's how wealth works, too—especially wealth that's backed up by the solid protection of an adequate supply of small arms.

Q: *We run a severely repressive dictatorship—torture, disappearances, no human freedoms, the works. We also refused to sign the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and frequently denounce your government. Is there any way we can qualify to buy your weapons?*

A: How does $3.2 billion sound? That's what we're giving Pakistan. Or take Argentina. People disappear down there faster than rabbits multiply, yet we just concluded a massive arms deal with the folks in Buenos Aires. And talk about bad-mouthing—the day after we shook hands on a $9-billion deal with the Saudis, they raised the price of oil and denounced the Camp David peace accords. There's no "fine print" in a U.S. arms sales deal!

Q: *Ours is a Communist country. How can we hope to purchase weapons from the anti-Communist U.S.?*

A: No problem. Sure, we rant and rave sometimes about the Communist menace, but that's just to speed congressional approval of arms sales to anti-Communist countries. We use other means to arm Communists—if the money's green, we don't care what color the ideology is. Right now, for instance, U.S. companies regularly ship sophisticated electronic missile guidance equipment to the Soviets, who practically invented Communism. U.S. pilots fly our C-130 transports and Chinook helicopters for Soviet-backed Libya on missions against Chad. And we recently concluded an arms agreement with the People's Republic of China—where they have twice as many Communists as the whole rest of the world combined!

Q: *We hear a lot about America's National Security. Selling us weapons could destabilize our region and threaten your vital interests. We can't get in on your offer, can we?*

A: Hey, we're in business to sell—not to think up complicated reasons for not selling. Our Northrop Corporation was getting anxious about unloading a bunch of expensive F-5G fighters. So we agreed to let them sell those planes to Taiwan—over the vehement objections of our new friends in Peking. We'll risk antagonizing a billion Chinese who have nuclear weapons in order to close this deal. After that, any threat posed by selling you weapons will look like a gnat on an elephant's rump.

Q: *Most countries have a complicated foreign policy, but yours seems to be, in a word,* weapons. *Isn't that too simplistic?*

A: Our foreign policy is simple because the world is simple. There are good people and bad people. We are good people. If you are good people too, we will sell you weapons so that you can protect yourselves from the bad people. If you are bad people we will also sell to you, because if the good people don't sell you weapons then the bad people will. And if bad people get the sale, they will get profits and political influence that will make them more powerful and therefore better able to be bad than they were before. Whether you're good or bad, buying from us makes good people more powerful—and you get your weapons just the same.

Q: *But aren't* weapons *bad? They do kill people, don't they?*

A: Weapons don't kill people, people kill people. A bad person will kill another person just as dead with a baseball bat as with a Redeye missile. Besides, who are we to say what is good and what is bad? Philosophers have kicked that one around for 6,000 years and they haven't gotten anywhere. So we don't try to figure it out—we let the market decide. If people pay top dollar for a product, it's good. If they don't, it isn't. Countries pay billions for American jets, tanks and guns—so our weapons must be good.

Q: *This all sounds too amazing to be true. Tell us, please, where do we sign up?*

A: Just fill out and return the handy order form—and don't forget to include your check. (Note: do not send currency through the mail.) If you're too poor, we offer a variety of generous financing plans. Taxpayers in our country generously make available a sizable chunk of their weekly paychecks so that you can have the weapons you crave. But whether it's cash or charge, the arms merchant of your choice will vigorously lobby Congress to approve the deal. Have a nice day!

Robert Moyer

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Trieste and Texas

Careless
(Columbia Pictures)

The Border
(Universal Pictures)

Two summers ago I visited Trieste because it's the city of Italo Svevo and James Joyce. My method of "doing" the city was simple: I marked on a street map the places where Svevo had lived (two) and where Joyce had lived (numerous) and, walking to them all in a couple of days, saw much of the city. I knew at the time that, in 1962, an Italian film had been made of Svevo's novel, *As A Man Grows Older*, and that it had been shot in Trieste, but I had long given up hope of seeing it. At last it has been shown here, in the Film at the Public series in New York: the title put on it by the U.S. distributor is *Careless*. It gave me a chance to see some of that enriching city again, but it's a frustrating experience.

If the picture were purely bad, it would bore or annoy. *Careless* frustrates: because in many ways it's good. It's the subtlest work I know by its director, Mauro Bolognini, a hot-and-cold filmmaker, known here chiefly for *La Viaccia* and *Il Bell' Antonio*. Bolognini and two other men made the screen adaptation, which is good enough and would have been better if they had not transposed the story to modern times from the 1890s of the book. (*Senilità* is its Italian title, and Svevo's biographer-critic, P. N. Furbank, calls it "one of the solidest masterpieces of 19th-century fiction.") The black-and-white cinematography by Armando Nannuzzi treats Trieste in a lovely offhand way. Most of the skies are gray and rainy, none of the city's beauties is crassly exploited; the tonality supports the story, and the beautiful city is a place where the characters live, which they *accept* without their comment or the camera's. And Claudia Cardinale gives an excellent performance.

She plays a working-class girl who becomes the beloved of an upper-class man of 35. (The man, by Victorian standards, is middle-aged; the doctor in Chekhov's *Three Sisters* says: "I'll soon be 60, I'm an old man . . . .") The girl is coy, affectionate, ductile; she means to be faithful and truthful, in general, but she is skillful at rationalizing her self-indulgences. The man, who is not a practiced adventurer, is utterly different in temperament. It is in their natures that he should want a kind of relationship that she cannot sustain, and because of the difference in their ages, the hurt is more his than hers. Cardinale is enchanting and maddening in the role, in an almost continuous cycle.

Even the fact that the American Betsy Blair, dubbed, plays the man's secretly alcoholic spinster sister who keeps house for him, doesn't hurt the picture. Her brother's friend, a sculptor—whose ignorance of her adoration is what makes the sister drink—is played by the French actor Philippe Leroy, dubbed and performed well enough. But the "middle-aged" hero, also dubbed, is played by—brace yourself—that is, if you can remember him—the American actor Anthony Franciosa.

What mistakes European directors can make in their choices of American actors. Think of Rod Steiger as Pope John in Olmi's *And There Came A Man* or Elliott Gould in Bergman's *The Touch*. Franciosa is one of the worst such choices. Even with a better voice than his own spliced in, he is thin and shallow, struggling to be dynamic, all wrong in physical effect and in bearing.

If it were possible to slip a more suitable actor into the very same picture, as one slips a new component into a motor, *Careless* would be a good film. If it were possible to splice in a new set of images as a new voice was spliced on to the Franciosa images, *Careless* might be salvaged. As is, it's a lost cause. Too bad.

The next-to-last picture made by the late Sir Carol Reed was one of the strangest film juxtapositions I know. This ultra-British director (*The Stars Look Down, Odd Man Out, The Fallen Idol*) made *Flap*, the story of an American Indian, Anthony Quinn, who leads an uprising on his reservation. Now comes a comparable oddity: the British director Tony Richardson (*Look Back in Anger, Tom Jones, The Charge of the Light Brigade*) makes *The Border*, with Jack Nicholson as a U.S. Border Patrol officer on the Mexican border. True, Richardson has directed here before: but *Sanctuary* was doomed before it began (with Yves Montand in Faulkner), and *The Loved One*, made from Evelyn Waugh, was English in vision. *The Border* is real Texas stuff, gritty and glaring. If Richardson has no vision to add to what we expect of such a milieu, at least he has seen, and remembered usefully, a lot of previous films about that country.

And he gets the best performance from Nicholson since *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* (1975). The macho lethargy, or lethargic machoism, that has come into Nicholson's work (*Reds*) or the unbridled exaggerations (*Goin' South, The Shining*), are gone; in their place, much of the best Nicholson returns. He doesn't quite have the threat of fire that he used to have, but he shows again his gift for authenticity, for implied susceptibilities, for suggestions of depth beneath the mundane. I assume that Richardson helped.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

My Dinner With André. Seemingly impromptu, carefully prepared table talk of André Gregory, theater director, and Wallace Shawn, playwright. Surprisingly fascinating.

Reds. The lives of John Reed and Louise Bryant (Warren Beatty and Diane Keaton), done in broad, often cutesy, sometimes fanciful, but consistently stirring style.

Sisters, or The Balance of Happiness. Margarethe von Trotta's delicate, strange film about two Hamburg sisters and their differing loves for each other. Melancholy, moving, perfectly made, ultimately a bit ambiguous—but so are many good poems.

SK

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The screenplay is by Deric Washburn (*The Deer Hunter*), Walon Green (*The Wild Bunch*), and David Freeman; it's a "subject" script. That is, it seems to have started with a topic, then was fleshed out with people, rather than starting with people who happen to live and work in certain ways. Many films, some plays, and almost all TV dramas are "subject" scripts, and look it. *The Border* looks it, too. The authors dreamed up people and entanglements to exploit the situation, and, in doing so, burdened themselves with one of those endings that is unwittingly merciful to the script: if the story went on, the logical consequences would make hash of the whole film, including the ending. But *The Border* manages to surpass its mechanics and strike a few true notes, mostly because of two performances that Richardson has helped into being.

THE FIRST, as noted, is from Nicholson, who, soon after the start of the picture, is stationed in El Paso and lives next door to another border patrolman whose wife is Nicholson's wife's old high school chum. (Some suggestions of possible quartet hanky-panky are not fulfilled.) The film begins slowly because of the trouble in getting Nicholson's path to cross that of a young Mexican mother, played—this is the second of the film's attractions—with dignified and winning sweetness by Elpidia Carrillo. We open with the christening of her baby in a huge Mexican cathedral. During the ceremony there's an earthquake, just to leave her a widow with an infant and with her own young brother. She proceeds to the border opposite El Paso, trying to get into the U.S. illegally, along with many others. That's the "subject": illegal immigration. (An immigration lawyer told me there are five million Mexicans here illegally.) And, before long, the young woman encounters Nicholson.

He is shown to be an unostentatiously decent man, trying to remain honest in a situation full of bribery and of the cruelties attendant on it. But partly to please his feather-brained, money-spending wife, he succumbs to corrupt pressures. The impress of Carrillo's quiet beauty and courageous suffering, contrasted with what he knows of his wife and his life, puts him through a moral wringer that results in violence.

The picture has plenty of clichés. The

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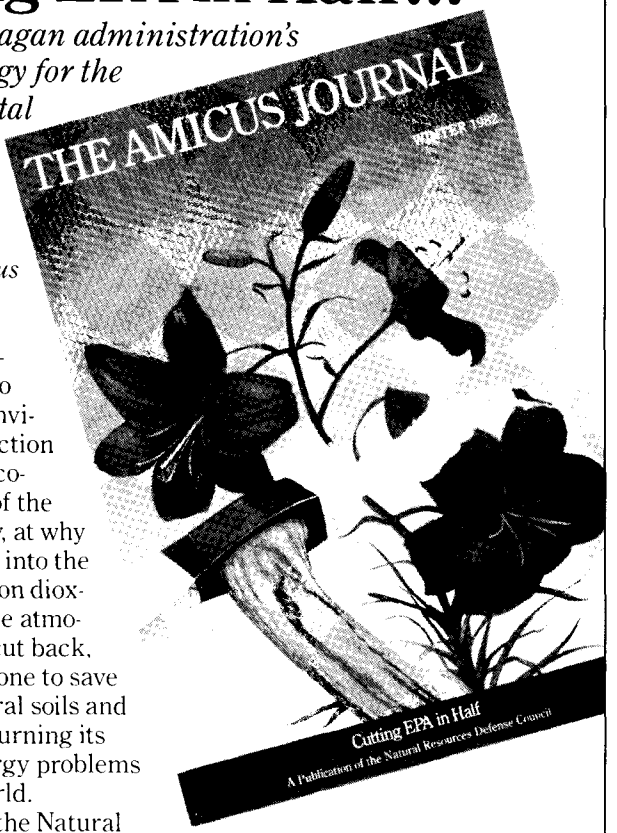

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sneaky Mexican pimp/informer *looks* like a sneaky Mexican pimp/informer. The pay-off man in the bribery scheme is an off-the-shelf whiskery eccentric. The scenes of middle-class Texan *luxe* are doubtless accurate but terribly tedious. Instead of putting us once more through those poolside barbecues and saloon shenanigans, I wish they could just flash a title card: "Here Follow Some Scenes of Plastic Middle-class Life"; then get on with the story. And, as noted, the last sequence is hooey; 1930s stuff strenuously but unconvincingly updated. Still, the two principal actors and Richardson's use of them give the picture some touches of the touching.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Heartaches and Gas Pains

The Curse of an Aching Heart (Little Theater) is William Alfred's homage to his South Brooklyn past, and for that reason, the play is as tender and old-fashioned as its title. The aching heart belongs to a sweet, working-class girl named Frances Walsh; we first encounter her, in a prologue, at the age of 43, saying yes to life. The play is intended to justify this affirmation despite her trying circumstances, through the events of five discrete sequences. The sequences contain some loose narrative links, but for the most part, they are affectionate, impressionistic scenes of the past, stippled with a nostalgic gouache. In the first flashback scene, Frances is 14. Dressed in a long wool sweater, wearing a woolen cap over her flowing hair, she roller-skates around the stage, singing a period song to harmonica accompaniment. In the next, she is two years older, and ripe enough to arouse the unwanted attention of the uncle with whom she lives. In the third, the nucleus of the play, she is a young woman making a perilous path through a world of ethnic charmers and drifters, most of them Irish, a world which evokes the amiable garrulity of Joyce's *Dubliners*, the brawls and arguments of Farrell's *Lonigan* trilogy.

The Curse of an Aching Heart
by William Alfred

Macbeth
by William Shakespeare

After feeding most of these boys, Frances eventually marries one; disappointed by life, he becomes a mean drunk. In the final scene of the play—like the prologue, it takes place in 1942—she returns to her childhood home, accompanied by her adolescent son. Her uncle, who has spent years regretting his incestuous attempt, is in a wheelchair; her aunt has been taken away after forgetting even her own name; thousands of miles across the ocean, Hitler is beginning to slaughter Jews. Unable to address each other directly, Frances and her uncle use the boy as intermediary. In one of the few direct emotional confrontations of the evening, the uncle shouts, "Fran—kiss me," and they effect a reconciliation. She embraces her son, who is puzzled by her sudden affection: "I was hugging life. . . . And some day you will." "Not me, I'll never," he replies. "Oh, yes, oh, yes, you will."

We accept the yeses that begin and end the play, as we accept them from Molly Bloom, partly because the heroine is so good-natured, partly because the author doesn't recoil from the bleakness of his characters, entrapped as they are in their grim fates ("What a rotten shame," cries Frances, "what little say we got about what happens to us"). *The Curse of an Aching Heart* makes no large claims as dramatic art. It is a small, naturalistic vaudeville of disconnected events, and often as circuitous in its movements as the route of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit car that circles around John Lee Beatty's skeletal tenement setting. But it is also sweet, leisurely, and relaxed, inspired by affection rather than ambition, courageous in its minimalism—therefore inevitably to be flattened by the juggernaut of Broadway blockbusters.

Gerald Gutierrez's direction is gentle and understated, like the play; he sensitively employs period music to bring us through the years; and he works with a strong cast, particularly Audrie Nennan in the role of Frances's cheeky girlfriend. As Frances, it is pleasant to see Faye Dunaway back on the stage where she can show her histrionic strength without the aid of wire coat hangers. Her face, a little tired now, still expresses the radiant melancholy of one surprised by her own beauty, and she moves with ease from adolescence through middle age. But I don't think Miss Dunaway is as successful with the emotional climaxes of her part as with its domestic, quotidian moments. It isn't courage she lacks so much as a comfortable rapport with the audience and the stage. Or so I would surmise from the discomfort she seemed to show in the curtain call.

NICOL WILLIAMSON peers at us morosely from the cover of the *Macbeth* playbill; his hair is neatly combed, slightly balding near the crown, his eyes are fixed on a point slightly above our heads. The same face appears in the Frank Rich review of the show which the producers of Circle in the Square have cruelly, unaccountably blown up in the lobby. One can understand Williamson's mood. Rumor has it that he once took a swipe at David Merrick. I wouldn't be surprised to find him chasing Theodore Mann and Paul Libin down the corridors with blood in his eyes. For his producers have sabotaged him in more ways than advertising his bad notices. This production is consistent with the Circle in the Square policy of presenting anthology favorites with a star and a pickup cast. The difference here—perhaps on the assumption that Nicol Williamson always needs a strong director—is that the star has been permitted to do both the acting and the staging.

Williamson's *Macbeth* seems to be set entirely in a church. The design consists of two tall Gothic arches, a huge cross stands upright on the stone floor, and the action is preceded by a concert of 19th-century organ music. The weird sisters, wearing black lipstick, enact a black mass, injecting pins in severed thumbs and effigies, before the Scottish troops march in, wearing jodphurs, riding boots, and woolen sweaters knitted to look like chain mail (hardly protection against enemy weapons since they are barely proof against moths). Enter

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the star, looking the image of his morose, well-barbered playbill persona, to learn his fate from the sisters. He is very tall. (In fact, everybody is very tall, with the notable exception of Lady Macbeth who is very small, except in the bosom and the hips. The part was originally to have been played by Sigourney Weaver, who is also very tall, though she was replaced for a few moments by the medium-sized Laurie Kennedy.) In addition to being tall, Mr. Williamson's Macbeth seems to have sinus trouble, which explains his nasal inflections, and perhaps even his pacing, since it may be medication that is making him race through the part.

Enter Lady Macbeth with a letter. As played by Andrea Weber, she has managed to supplement what seems to be a Great Neck education with a few lessons from an English voice coach who has taught her to roll the r's she doesn't flatten and to add extra syllables to words like *entrance* ("en-ter-ance"). Her request to be unsexed is not very convincing, especially since she delivers much of the speech from the floor, wiggling her ample bottom. She is again on all fours during the sleepwalking scene, where she seems incensed not only by the spots on her hands, but also by a few grease stains that have seem to have appeared on the carpet; this performance owes less to Shakespeare than to detergent commercials.

MEANWHILE, Macbeth is beginning to see a lot of things invisible to us; the phantom dagger, for example, lying somewhere on the stone floor; Banquo's ghost, now little more than an unprepossessing jointstool; even the witches' apparitions, which fail to materialize except in his hypnotized mind. Williamson, in fact, seems to play most of the role in a hypnotic state. Aside from his furrowed brow and hunched shoulders, his Macbeth is generally unaffected either by the suffering of others or his own. Perhaps he's undernourished; there sure doesn't seem to be much food in the court (the banquet scene features only ten people sharing a stoup of wine). But though ill-fed, he's certainly not ill-clad; his wardrobe offers an endless variety. Williamson has interpolated a coronation scene for Macbeth (as did Sarah Caldwell in the Lincoln Center production), which gives him the opportunity to inhabit a huge cloth-of-gold cloak, and, with his followers, the opportunity to change into a number of romantic costumes, including turtleneck shirts, tunics, and cavalry swords, which give them the look of courtiers in *The Prisoner of Zenda*, with Macbeth as Rupert of Hensau.

After turning a cross upside down, Macbeth appears before the weird sisters in an army greatcoat, to be anointed as a true devil worshipper; the witches tie a bandanna around his head, hang trinkets from his neck, and draw crosses on both his cheeks. Thus transformed into Captain Hook, Macbeth spends much of the remaining moments of the play perched precariously on a throne which has been hoisted on top of two wobbly tables, wielding his curved sword and making warlike Scottish noises ("I gin to be a-weeeeery of the sun"). Informed by Macduff that he was a premature child and thus not of woman born, Macbeth tears off his pirate trinkets, exchanges three perfunctory sword strokes with his opponent, and runs off stage. Macduff returns carrying Macbeth's crown, apparently having disdained to bring in his head. More crosses are lugged onto the stage; Malcolm gets to inhabit the cloth-of-gold coronation gown; and everyone leaves in a dead march. Including the audience. Including me.

In thrall to bodies.

SEX PROVIDED

BY CZESLAW MILOSZ

> Woman is in her right and even fulfills a sort of obligation when she takes pains to appear as a magical and supernatural creature.
>
> —Baudelaire

The satisfaction of hunger has first place in the hierarchy of human needs, and it is quite easy to understand why the sexual myth has arisen in the civilization which began producing surplus food like no other before it. Nevertheless, the exuberance and ubiquity of that myth are astonishing and can be evaluated only by first forcibly detaching oneself from that which surrounds us every day. At every moment I am exposed to the myth's numerous ramifications; the printed word, magazine illustrations, film, television, the music from transistor radios, have all been drawn into its service. There is a certain automatic quality to all of this, for the consumer's attention and thus his money are most easily attracted by appealing to people's most common interests. Furthermore, the increasingly rapid growth of the media is subject to the law of action which, after all, consists of nothing else but people pursuing one another—either to kill each other or to make love. If I use the word "myth" it is because, with the increasingly larger doses of stimuli and enticements, there has arisen a set of beliefs which are instinctive in appearance only; they are, in reality, like all collective creations, "artificial."

It is not surprising that the body of a beautiful woman excites desire in me, but isn't it something else again when there are a thousand or ten thousand bodies, more or less naked, offering themselves to me, their faces fixed in ecstasy? What is the meaning of their throaty love-calls, the nervous laughter reverberating from radios and records? That abundance forces me to defend myself with humor, smiling and indifferent as a pasha in his harem; and yet, in spite of my higher, detached self, I am aware of the leg, buttock, hip advertising a new film or new cosmetic. Quantity changes into quality here and a new quality of experience imperceptibly and painlessly leads one to philosophy. And that is the philosophy of the Islands of Happiness, where everything natural is without sin, an earthly paradise. Knowing others in their nakedness and known by them in mine, I take and am taken, an orgiastic identity

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Czeslaw Milosz won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1980. This essay is excerpted from *Visions From San Francisco Bay* by Czeslaw Milosz, to be published this spring. English translation copyright © 1982 by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Translated from the Polish by Richard Lourie.

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unites us. Except that the Islands of Happiness, once discovered in Polynesia by sailors from the Puritan countries, have been conquered by the church of hygiene.

Public discussions about perfect and imperfect orgasm; equal rights to pleasure for men and women; the Pill, allowing women to give themselves to love without fear of pregnancy; an antipathy to temperance as contradicting the requirements of good health; virginity as a humorous indisposition which needs to be disposed of—these were not subjects for our ancestors. In *Brave New World* and other antiutopias, sex, made universal and considered an ordinary physiological function, appears, not without reason, as a major cause of depersonalization. What generally escapes the attention of the authors of antiutopias (which, in any case, are already realities), is the severance of myth from instinct. The existence of the gods and heroes of mythology was accepted on faith although no one actually encountered them; similarly, sex in itself, the act of fulfillment in its purest and most isolated form exists only in magazine illustrations, in the promises of advertisements, on the screen. Sex of that sort changes me into an object, as does the knowledge of the proper functioning of the liver which is the one universal liver as represented in my body. Normality serves as a standard of measure and is applied to my representative liver. But, unfortunately, in the case of sex, normality is only imagined and desired. The majority of men and women encounter certain difficulties and complications in this area, though none of them is eager to admit it, hiding the sadness of hunchbacks in their souls. The sexual myth provides them images which assure them that the happiness of orgasmic union is easy to achieve. Flaubert's poor Madame Bovary wanted to find in life the same love she had found in romantic novels. The pattern has changed and romantic love has acquired the name of perfect orgasm, but now, sung, spoken, illustrated, it beckons everyone to dream.

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HAS NAKEDNESS ever been for people what it now is for us? This is an important and philosophical question. A woman undressing in a film made in 1919 removes clothes fashionable in 1919; she is not naked but uncovered by what she has removed, and more resembles a woman from the same period with her clothes on than a naked woman from the second half of the century. Similarly, nudes in Renaissance paintings are husked out of the dress of the epoch but still are, so to speak, enfolded in them, except that these garments are invisible. The body always bears a trace of the clothes which covered it, for example, belts or stays, but, above all, the trace of the bearing, gestures, and postures imposed by the clothes commonly worn. What is most important here is, however, the constantly changing manner in which we see the body. Bodies are not seen by some abstract "human eye" but by a person belonging to the style of his times, with a constantly shifting sensitivity to certain shapes and lines so that the object of his erotic or aesthetic admiration, naked and clothed, cannot be separated from each other. Perhaps the "body in itself" is as much beyond our grasp as the "thing in itself."

And what if today's nakedness evokes not so much images of "undressedness" but another nakedness, that of masses of naked bodies? Masses of naked bodies do indeed appear in old paintings, which indicates that the collective dimension was not then alien to the imagination but, more often than not, those were renderings of the tangled bodies of the damned falling into the abyss of hell. In daily life painters did not have much occasion to see many naked human figures and perhaps that is why they shifted such scenes into the hereafter. Large numbers of people were not found even at the baths and, moreover, were of the same sex. Or, if the sexes did mingle, it was only in baths protected against the gaze of intruders. Beaches, swimming pools, concentrations camps —that is, places where people voluntarily or by force surrender to the mass —are another matter.

Such places play a double role; as a direct experience or as images from photographs, films, television. Moreover, the distance between "being in the mass" as directly experienced and as information obtained from the media is diminishing, whereas the ability for people to identify with Everyman is on the rise. That word, "Everyman," refers us back to the medieval morality play, though there it was a question of the adventure of the soul, either saved or damned. Physiological humanity clinging to itself resembles a sort of coral reef. It was not by chance that, when speaking of nakedness and sex, I made reference to the concentration camp: the corpses of prisoners, spread-legged, their private parts exposed to public view, this is what the prisoners were for the camp administrators who assigned them numbers. The sexual myth slowly, gradually standardizes and deprivatizes bodies, changing them into objects whose stock is apparently inexhaustible, no matter what plagues might afflict the species. Unfortunately, the acceptance of the freedom we are magnanimously offered is laced with hatred; this is not an age of jolly pornographers. From Eliot's *Sweeney Agonistes* we learn that on South Sea Islands there is nothing but "birth, copulation, and death." But "birth, copulation, and death" belong to the condition of man in general; they are universal, impersonal, even anti-personal, categories and do not have the consent of the individual, for the individual wants more; he wants to be immortal and unique. Were it otherwise, the Islands of Happiness would not have become symbols of sinister boredom.

THE ANTIUTOPIANS of our century (Zamiatin, Huxley, Orwell) depicted societies under total control where the absence of freedom is called freedom. In such societies the rulers take care to supply the ruled with suitable diversions to prevent mental anxiety. Sexual games best fulfill that function. It is a credit to the intuition of the authors of those books that they depict Eros acting as a subversive force, which is no secret to the authorities: sex is anti-erotic and not only poses no threat, but effectively prevents the appearance of the passions, which draw persons, not bodies, together and engage them both as flesh and spirit. The hero enters upon a dangerous path when he is awakened by love. Only then is the slavery disguised and accepted by everyone revealed to him as slavery.

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TILL THE COURTS DO US PART

Life After Marriage by A. Alvarez

(Simon and Schuster, 269 pp., $13.95)

Marriage, Love, Sex and Divorce by Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy

(Summit Books, 384 pp., $14.95)

Some years ago, soon after my divorce, a psychiatrist told me he was professionally consulting his own analyst and mentor, the occasion being the psychiatrist's impending second marriage: he wanted to be sure he wasn't marrying for "neurotic" reasons or repeating "negative patterns"; he wanted assurance that he wasn't wedding the wrong woman. Poor wife-to-be, I thought; how can she countenance being kept on hold while he has his psyche vetted? If he'd consulted me—which of course he did not—I'd have said, consult your own heart; intuition and prayer are all we have to go on. He would have considered my remarks fatuous. I considered his cold-blooded. He is now divorced for the second time, and I have not remarried. In matters of the heart, and where heart and reason converge, as one assumes they do in marriage—and, alas, in divorce—there are no oracles, and no guarantees.

Life After Marriage and *Marriage, Love, Sex and Divorce* are oracular—*faux*-oracular. Both Alvarez and Gathorne-Hardy pronounce in favor of "easy" (no fault) divorce—which strikes one, at first, as rather silly, given the fact that we already enjoy it (if that is the word). On reflection, their tenuous defense of easy divorce begins to appear rather wistful, not to say bleak: we want easy divorce because it facilitates the free expression of sexual passion; yet easy divorce may exactly defeat its own aim. It is just possible that easy divorce may lead to the expectation that no relationship can last; this cynical expectation, in turn, may inhibit passion in the same way that marriage contracts do. It is, after all, difficult to declare your love, "Till death do us part"—and to mean it—in the teeth of the divorce statistics.

This sense of paradox is absent from these books. Both end on a kind of pseudo-uplifting-happiness-may-be-possible-the-second-time-around note. Both men want life to be good, as who does not?—if not the first marriage around, then the next, or the next. But there's a kind of wimpy babyishness in their attitude: Why, they seem to be saying, are children such a bother? Why do nappies insist on getting wet? Why is it impossible to have dinner by candlelight with two bumptious teenagers around? Why do we get old? Why does flesh wither, romance die? They gripe a lot. Their argument seems to be with life itself.

These books are nearly as impossible to read as the self-help books Gathorne-Hardy goes out of his way to deplore. In fact, they *are* self-help books. Their subtitles seem designed to cater to the voracious appetite for self-helpery: Alvarez's is *Love in An Age of Divorce*, Gathorne-Hardy's *What Brings us Together, What Drives us Apart*. But they are more high-minded and literary than most of the competition. *So* high-minded. Both books are an uneasy mixture of pain—both men have been divorced—and scholarship. *So* scholarly: an indigestible brew of theology, psychology, sociology, history, philosophy. And very, very British: Alvarez and Gathorne-Hardy seem to regard America (from which they draw many of their anecdotes and their statistics) as a frontier or an aberration, or both. I don't know whether Mr. Alvarez and Mr. Gathorne-Hardy are intimates, but their books are in so many ways so much alike that I kept imagining them scuttling back and forth between their respective London pubs, cheering each other on: "Have you addressed yourself to the Rage to Divorce in Ancient Rome, Alvarez?" "In my next chapter, Gathorne-Hardy. . . . Have you addressed yourself to the Libidinous 18th Century?" "In my next chapter, Alvarez." Do all English men of letters know everything, or think they have to?

Alvarez (whose book on suicide, *The Savage God*, was generally well received) says that it was originally his intention "to write a book on divorce rather like my study of suicide: a kind of critical meditation, with some history and philosophy, but above all literary and personal. . . . When it came to writing," he found, however,

> the problems were utterly dissimilar. Where suicide seemed to reach out continually toward the imagination and a whole world of literature, including Hamlet's most famous soliloquy, divorce seemed above all a matter of theological and legal argument.

What this conclusion led him to was a series of interviews out of which he has "blended voices, incidents, hints" to arrive at "composite voices." In other words, he's made them up. But in addition to the "composite voices" and the legal and theological argument, we do get lots of literature—embellishing his composites and his personal portrait.

Alvarez, who is quite capable of writing with great felicity, is moving on the subject of his own first, failed marriage—although on the subject of his divorce—he left *her*, after she found *him* with another girl—he is one-sided, as, when it comes to it, we all are (the side we take is our own). Unfortunately for the reader, he married D. H. Lawrence's granddaughter. So we get an awful lot of literature. If you're going to confront your suffering directly, it's probably wise to leave Anna Karenina and Saul Bellow out of it, at least part of the time. Alvarez can't—or won't. One of the sufferers he interviews is a granddaughter of someone Edith Wharton modeled a character on. Two other sufferers write literary essays immediately they decide to divorce. There are, believe me, no greengrocers or high school dropouts in this book. I'm not saying that literature shouldn't come into it. I'm saying only that it's somewhat bloodless to introduce Henry James's Tragic Sense of Life into every sad song you, or others, sing. Even Oscar Wilde occasionally man-

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aged to suffer unselfconsciously; grief implies a degree of abandonment, not an affair with a Bartlett's.

Alvarez on the history of divorce is, if not an intellectual bully, certainly immodest. In order for this book to work at all, one is obliged to believe not only his interpretation of the facts, but his representation of the facts themselves. I see no compelling reason to do either. "Historically speaking," he says, "it is the taboo on divorce that is the recent phenomenon, and not one easily explained." "Roman divorce set standards of fairness and common sense which we are now slowly regaining," writes Alvarez, who, like Gathorne-Hardy, is at pains to prove that the collapse of Rome had little to do with "easy" divorce and licentiousness. "Where did it all go wrong?" Alvarez asks. "Christianity [transformed] a civil arrangement into a spiritual condition." This is a relentlessly secular book. Alvarez, for whom religion is "decay," is convinced that nobody adheres to the belief that marriage is sacramental anymore, except, of course, the "repressive" clergy—so it does not occur to him that Christian idealism and the institution of marriage are directly, in fact inseparably, connected.

Naturally St. Paul comes in for a licking. It takes all of three pages to dispose of him, though what with Alvarez's love of literature, one might think he'd be a little kinder to Paul, who, no matter what else one might say about him, wrote like an angel. Canon law is similarly disposed of. "Penitential," Alvarez calls canon law, which allows for divorce on these grounds: adultery or unnatural offenses; impotence; cruelty; infidelity; entering into a religion, i.e., retiring into a monastery or nunnery; consanguinity. A very broad net, one might think, proof of which is that the Church—which, as Mr. Alvarez gleefully points out, once sold annulments as it did indulgences—is now very liberally dispensing annulments. But then canon law doesn't allow for "incompatibility" as grounds, and "incompatibility" is Mr. Alvarez's standard. Luther and the Reformation fare equally badly at Mr. Alvarez's hands (three pages). And so to the 1960s. Alvarez quotes Elizabeth Hardwick: "Technology annihilates consequence." Does it? Is sex now inconsequential? Even if the risk of conception is minimalized, doesn't every sexual encounter present an existential risk? Does technology annihilate conscience? "After more than a thousand years," Alvarez concludes, "we are back to the reasonable attitude toward divorce that prevailed everywhere until

'THE LONELY ONES' (1895) BY EDVARD MUNCH

Saint Paul and the demented ascetics who followed him" preached "misery now and justification in the hereafter." (Which, by the way, St. Paul did not.)

So now we're all as happy as clams.

Except that we aren't.

OVER THE LAST thirty years," Gathorne-Hardy says, "the subject [of marriage] has been wrung almost dry," a state of affairs he remedies by writing "an analysis of love, marriage, sex, and divorce in the world today," an idea which he then proceeds to call "absurd. You might as well write a book called Life."

Gathorne-Hardy, who wrote a readable book about nannies, is more class-conscious than Alvarez. When he looks at Rome, he remembers that there were slaves; when he looks at the "sexual revolution" of the 18th century, he reminds himself that he is talking about the upper classes. ("All the time, largely unaffected, the mass of the people . . . go on behaving much as they have always done.") His book rests on the premise that social/sexual movements last "from 80 to 120 years," after which they "come to an end and go into some sort of reverse." So he is off, hither and yon, looking for parallels and portents. One moment we are in a Scottish border town in the 15th century where the women "didn't mind" being raped, the next in the laboratories of Masters and Johnson, observing multiple orgasms—all in aid of understanding our own "sexual revolution." With all this skipping around, it is perhaps inevitable that he should contradict himself: "Behind the eyes of the man watching Miss World lurks the potential Camp Guard at Belsen," he says. And on the same page:

> It is true that to destroy people you must reduce them to units. It does not follow that sexual objectifying will lead automatically to such an extreme expression of it. . . . A good deal of such objectifying is essential.

Is my inability to grasp these apparent contradictions a result of my American literal-mindedness? Gathorne-Hardy is pretty literal-minded, or flat-footed, himself at times: "all surveys and studies agree on the enormous importance of love," he says. Do we need a book to tell us this?

I forced myself—buoyed by the occasional interesting anecdote—to read all 300-plus pages of Gathorne-Hardy. Given the degree of enlightenment that ensued, I might have spared myself the trouble and read only his conclusions, among which are: "social conventions" become "psychological necessities"; "romantic lovers in the innermost recesses of their being were obeying the dictates of a wish for death"; "this need for suffering is fundamental because we reach knowledge and self-awareness by testing ourselves and extreme tests are bound to lead to death and pain"; "the ultimate love is love of ourselves"; "ro-

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mantic love is almost entirely disruptive." This notion of love as death wish seems to me to be exclusively male, perhaps because women associate love with renewal and life, in the form of babies. Of course, women are capable of behaving masochistically, self-destructively; but they tend not to see their behavior as archetypal. They see it as a personal dislocation.

Having endorsed easy divorce, both writers come down heavily for marriage—Gathorne-Hardy because "marriage is about the Jungian view of salvation" or "individuation." Marriage, says Gathorne-Hardy,

> is an endless series of exalted high feelings and deep low ones, a continuous belt of ups and downs. It has happy moments of course . . . but also suffering and sacrifices. The long-term confrontation of marriage is only possible if one or both partners renounce something important.

Gathorne-Hardy doesn't say what has to be renounced, only that "sacrifice is necessary for the personality." I find this view of marriage rancid. Perhaps it has something to do with the British climate. Why are the British always renouncing for love? I don't see what this rhetoric has to do with that "compatibility" Alvarez and Gathorne-Hardy are always on about; nor do I see how Jungian mysticism fits in with easy divorce laws or shared child custody.

For their part, Alvarez and Gathorne-Hardy don't see why romantic love, sex, and marriage and children have been "joined together." They don't like the "jumble" this results in. It's "unbalancing." Romantic love and marriage are (Gathorne-Hardy says) "incompatible," just as children are "inimical to that concentration and exclusivity demanded by romantic love." Neither one of them knows what to do with these so-called facts, so recalcitrant do the "facts" appear to be. Neither one of them will entirely commit himself to the idea that while marriage may begin with romantic love, it can become an enduring union based on need, friendship, affection, loyalty, duty—in a word, on love. So they back and file, championing first monogamy, then promiscuity, about which Gathorne-Hardy says, "insofar as [prosmiscuity] is an expression of emotional difficulty it is among the most harmless. . . . The only dangers are of pregnancy (now negligible), and of hurting yourself or others." No matter how charming Gathorne-Hardy is—and he can be charming—that idiot sentence is reason enough to dismiss him.

In fact I don't see that either man has made much of a case for anything.

Freedom is difficult, they say. (No kidding.)

Is happiness the point? they ask. (The question has been raised before.)

As I say, Gathorne-Hardy's most passionate plea is that the rights of fathers be restored. He wants shared custody of the children of divorce. He can't understand why feminists don't advocate it. The fact is that most feminists do. The further (sad) fact is that shared custody does not lead to Arcadia. I'll never forget seeing a little girl crying hopelessly on my avenue. She was crying, she said, for her red boots. Her red boots were at her Daddy's house. It was Wednesday—her day to be at her Mommy's house.

The past was terrible, they say, except for those periods in which there was easy divorce, but: "People today are able to commit the most appalling mistakes; we are making ourselves and our children suffer in ways which are every bit as bad, though different, as in the past." Still, Gathorne-Hardy is determined to be optimistic. We are, he believes, returning to a "gentle" version of Christianity: " 'Thy sins are forgiven thee.' " We are now, he says, embarking on a new period of sex, marriage, divorce (what have you) without guilt. Of course he confuses guilt and sin. He seems to believe that Christ died so that we could stop feeling guilty about any and all explorations and experimentations. But, as he says, we are "exhilarated" and "confused." He certainly is. Confused.

PERHAPS THE mess is inevitable: the confusion reflects a confusion in our hearts and in our culture. Nobody in his or her right mind would wish for the bad old days of frozen unions based on financial and emotional coercion and the double standard. If we start with the idea (not new) that the body is good and that erotic pleasure is good in and of itself, we are led—or so the conventional wisdom goes—inevitably to the liberating desire for variety and intensity of experience. But the desire for variety and intensity of experience can easily transform and cheapen the pursuit of happiness into the chase for pleasure. Then, as observers and participants in the merry chase, we are obliged

STYLE

pervades every aspect of life, from how one is born to how one is buried. Every way in which the style of one group differs from that of another group is not only noticeable and recognizable, it is a difference that can evoke admiration and imitation or hostility and conflict.

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to ask ourselves how one achieves personal liberation without forfeiting family-learned values of stability, constancy, mutual and social responsibility —and without the "social convention" of divorce becoming our children's "psychological necessity." We ask what legacy we are bequeathing to the children of divorce.

The trouble is that everybody—I don't exclude myself—believes his or her divorce to have been totally justified. What we have profited from, what has secured for us a measure of surcease from pain, we don't wish to deny others. Nevertheless, the epidemic of divorces makes us nervous.

I expect we will continue to muddle along with two contradictory ideas: that personal liberation is desirable; and that the quest for self-fulfillment as an end in itself is both tawdry and doomed to frustration—a confusion nicely expressed by Paul Robinson, who, in his *Modernization of Sex*, has written:

> As moderns, we remain permanently divided between a Romantic past, whose repressions we would gladly rid ourselves of, and a deromanticized future, whose emotional emptiness we fear even while we anticipate its greater freedom.

BARBARA GRIZZUTI HARRISON

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison is the author of *Visions of Glory: A History and a Memory of Jehovah's Witnesses* (Simon and Schuster) and *Off Center* (Dial).

ODETS, WHERE IS THY STING?

Clifford Odets, American Playwright: The Years from 1906 to 1940
by Margaret Brenman-Gibson

(Atheneum, 748 pp., $30)

In the first few weeks of 1935, both *Waiting for Lefty* and *Awake and Sing!* opened in New York to extraordinary excitement. Twenty-eight-year-old Clifford Odets was hailed as a "comet" and a "thunderbolt." A decade or so later, when I came to the plays, full of expectation, I was not struck by lightning. Though respectful of all that Odets represented in the 1930s and at moments caught up in the passion that still surged through his work, I found the political declamations worn, the language ripe, the people on the edge of parody. So did many others. I concluded that you had to be there.

Alfred Kazin, like Odets a child of Jewish immigrants, was there, and later conveyed the sense of self-discovery experienced by a second-generation youth in the second balcony of the Belasco theater:

> Everything so long choked up in twenty thousand damp hallways and on all those rumpled summer sheets, everything still smelling of the cold shadowed sand littered with banana peels under the boardwalk at Coney Island, everything that went back to the graveled roofs over the tenements, the fire escapes in the torrid nights, the food, the food, the pickle stands of the subway and the screams of protest—'I never in my life even had a birthday party. Every time I went and cried in the toilet when my birthday came'—and now out in the open, at last, and we laughed.

Kazin's laughter was in a different spirit from the sort of laughter that *Awake and Sing!* brought when I saw it. But even at that time Odets could hardly have viewed his play, or his life, as comedy. This is the biography of a man in torment. The pain began with the family that would be the fount of his creative bursts. His father, born Gorodetsky, comes through as a bully, hustler, and fancy man, an all-around no-goodnik, who tortured his timid wife and made daily existence a misery for his son. The son, a loner given to fears in the night, was never able to free himself from the overbearing father, in memory or in life; Louis J. Odets survived Clifford. The character of L. J. is easily spotted in several of the plays, where, typically, a sensitive youth struggles against the brute power of an older man.

THE THEATER exercised its fascination early on good-looking, self-dramatizing Clifford; becoming a minor actor with the Group Theater was like finding a new and superior family. It was still very much a Jewish family—Harold Clurman and Lee Strasberg were the dominant figures, with Clurman soon to take the role, pardon the expression, of surrogate father. But unlike one's real immigrant family, it was *elevated*. The talk about art and social conscience, about Stanislavsky and Stalin, about the link between actors and audience, the idealism and the communality of it, all were enough to intoxicate less susceptible youths than Odets. In addition, he seems to have been drawn to it despite himself by the outsized egos and the bruising battles for power, so reminiscent of home and father.

Life as battle was the theme of Odets's relations with women, too—and there were lots of those. Here's his opinion of Tallulah Bankhead:

> She suffers from an awful and big sense of 'insufficiency.' She feels all people are aware of that lack and she compensates for it by giving you her sex instruments for your use and possible pleasure. That is her way of binding you to her. She really knows nothing, hasn't the concentration of a fish on a dish.

He was driven by his demons to destroy his marriage to Luise Rainer, a sensitive and loving woman caught up in the toils of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. His own contest with Hollywood was another source of torment; it began as soon as success struck and ended only with his death. Indeed, it appears that everyone in the Group Theater was eager to have a crack at the capital of schlock, where money came down like sunshine; it was easier to keep pure if, like Lee Strasberg, you couldn't get an offer.

So Odets is a rich subject for a biography. Whether it need be this long a biography is something else. The present volume, of 613 densely packed pages, not counting notes, takes us only into 1940; volume two is on the way.

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Does Clifford Odets require a thousand pages to do him justice? Margaret Brenman-Gibson's problem is that she was a psychoanalyst before she became a biographer, and has not quite managed the leap from composing a case history to telling the story of somebody's life. She sets out to show that Odets's work "reveals substantially the same personality themes and struggles, repeated over and over," with the same characters recurring in different shapes. That can certainly be demonstrated. Unfortunately, her technique is to quote, at length, from the letters and diaries of Odets and from other people's letters to him, and then tag on a piece of analytic wisdom, like this one:

> It appears that 'to be the filler' or 'fed' passively by identifying with his partner in sexual intercourse—in fact or fancy—is not enough; he must simultaneously assert his masculine (sometimes even sadistic) power; in short, to assume at one and the same time, however unconsciously, a feminine *and* masculine identification.

This sort of thing fast becomes intrusive; it puts distance between reader and subject, turns Odets into a member of the Freudian stock company. Simple observations are puffed up into primordial truths and the person we want to get at is walled in by formulas.

SHE DOES A SIMILAR job on the plays, offering an elaborate exegesis of each of them, produced and unproduced, analyzing each to a fare thee well. Here she is on the climax of *Waiting for Lefty*:

> On one level this represents Odets' fantasy that his own death (or suicide) would represent the fulfillment of his father's wish and a final *revenge* on him. On another level it represents also, by way of a Christlike blood sacrifice, a transcendent communality with all the 'deprived' and thus a 'merger' into a loving oceanic consciousness.

Such formulations have something in common with the zippier political slogans that captured audiences of the 1930s; they all wore out fast and have become the stuff of gags. It is not that Margaret Brenman-Gibson, Ph.D., does not have intelligent insights into what made Clifford run or that she is not a diligent and sympathetic chronicler; quite the contrary. But the language of psychoanalysis, her preferred tongue, has some time since become a method for shortcutting thinking about people. A single line here and there in the course of Odets's story is more revealing than all the pointers to "identity-elements" (of which there are enough in these pages to people a season-full of plays). For example, Odets says to Strasberg, who was no admirer of his work, "You act just like my father." And he puts into the mouth of the brutal but engaging Chinese warlord General Yang in his first film, *The General Died at Dawn*, a version of L. J.'s favorite line, "You will see—I *big* man." The reader must slash his way through the undergrowth of interpretation to get at details like these, which a more adept biographer would have drawn attention to by judicious pruning.

Similarly, there are solid subplots here which the author recognizes and deals with perceptively but which tend to be obscured amid all the extracts and the analysis. The Group Theater is worth a book or two of its own. It served as a way station from the Yiddish theater to the American theater. Its more talented or luckier actors, like Franchot Tone and John Garfield, made it big in Hollywood, and its more salable playwrights, for example Maxwell Anderson, wrote hits for Broadway. The Group's own productions were, as a group, earnest but not comet-like. Strasberg and Clurman were better at theory than at the real thing. (Elia Kazan, an actor with the Group, did his directing elsewhere.) The Group Theater survived as long as it did on its ideas rather than on its practice—Strasberg imported Stanislavsky to America—and on the comradeship it offered to young folks who needed it badly. It pioneered encounter sessions for the alienated, winning the sobriquet of Grope Theater. That the Group glows so warmly in the memory is less a tribute to its theatrical accomplishments than to the spirit of dedication to a greater cause, the joining of art and life in the service of the little guy, who was made so much of in the 1930s.

Odets, like the Group itself, was caught up in the ideological currents of his time and place and could never be sure whether he was swimming with them or against them or just being carried along. Whereas newspaper reviewers were turned off by the crude rah-rah spirit of *Lefty*—"HELLO, AMERICA! HELLO. WE'RE STORMBIRDS OF THE WORKING CLASS! WORKERS OF THE WORLD . . . OUR BONES AND BLOOD!"—the left's commissars of culture criticized him when he strayed from the precisely correct line. They were, as always,

WHAT JILL SEES

Away from our deck chairs,
Up at the front of the boat,
Jill spots something. "Look there,"
And our eyes follow where her arm points
Far out on the water; to what?
No cloud where sky and sea meet
Hovers and shines, no sea speck.
Our angle must be wrong, too much spray
Or glare from where we sit.

We all turn back to watch her,
Her eyes still fixed, arm still pointing,
Then dropping as a flag drops
When the wind dies. In a minute,
Before it loses its edge,
She'll tell us what it was
Or try to, no woman for secrets,
With no desire to surpass her friends
In favors or experience,
Troubled to be sole witness.

And we'll all try to picture it
And describe it as well as she can
Or better, with a deeper color,
All of us eager to bring a gift back
To our friends on shore.
To hope that they've had a dull day
So our story will stand out all the more
Is shameful, and we shake it off,
Unlike the unshakable wish
To be more vivid than a flag or sea cloud
And live longer than these live in memory
If not forever.

CARL DENNIS

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wrong—but they were onto something about Odets. The public passions of the 1930s joined explosively with his private needs to bring out his most vital talents. The Jewishness and the politics that would cause him trouble in the inquisitorial 1950s were deep strengths and inescapable weaknesses; his struggle to break away from the polemics of *Lefty* and the kitchen lyricism of *Awake and Sing!* was an artist's struggle—which he did not win.

Odets lived until 1963, but, inevitably, he is remembered as a man of the 1930s. The rest of his life was no happier and far less fruitful. One must wish Dr. Margaret Brenman-Gibson well in her devoted and indubitably definitive work, but the reader who completes this book can only look forward with sadness to the final long acts of a sad story.

WALTER GOODMAN

Walter Goodman is the author of *The Committee* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) and director of humanities programming at WNET in New York.

THE NEW SCIENCE OF COGNITION

The Mind's I: Fantasies and Reflections on Self and Soul composed and arranged by Douglas R. Hofstadter and Daniel C. Dennett

(Basic Books, 280 pp., $15.50)

The behaviorist's attempt to explain all human thought in terms of stimuli and responses—it was really a denial of thinking—has failed. Hardly anyone still hopes to account for problem-solving, language, creativity, consciousness of self, or free will, without positing a mind which includes elaborate internal structures and mechanisms, rich mines of information, along with rules for transforming that information. (Perhaps only psychologists ever thought it could be possible to avoid such complexity.) And so now we have the cognitive sciences, the new amalgam of disciplines ranging from neurology to philosophy, which enthusiastically celebrate the mind.

The celebrants paired here are well qualifed to introduce the cognitive sciences to a wider public. There is Douglas Hofstadter, computer scientist at the University of Indiana, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his remarkable *Gödel, Escher, Bach*, and more recently author of a column on "Metamagical Themas" for the *Scientific American*. Joining him is Daniel Dennett, philosopher at Tufts University, author of *Brainstorms*, a collection of essays which has been favorably reviewed and is fast gaining influence across the cognitive sciences. Both men possess lively minds: they are excellent writers, as well as keen analysts. The title, the subtitle, and the reputation of the authors, all raised my hopes that I would be educated about current work in the cognitive sciences. I was especially eager to learn of fresh hypotheses or novel syntheses put forth by Hofstadter and Dennett since their seminal works a few years ago.

What the "composers" and "arrangers" have in fact done is collect 27 heterogeneous essays drawn from a variety of disciplines and perspectives. With one exception, the essays are followed by "Reflections": short commentaries by one or both of the composers which place the essays in a wider context, and often suggest additional implications or readings. Included among the essayists are not only leading cognitive scholars like Alan Turing, Thomas Nagel, and John Searle, but also such masters of fiction as Jorge Luis Borges and Stanislaw Lem. In the six selections of the book we encounter fantasies and reflections on, respectively, "A Sense of Self," "Soul Searching," "From Hardware to Software," "Mind as Program," "Created Selves and Free Will," and "The Inner Eye." A heady feast.

Despite the mix of authors, disciplines, and degrees of abstruseness, certain common devices, themes, and problems run through the book. Several of the writers present "Gedanken experiments" (thought experiments), in which, say, a mind is transplanted from one body to another, a brain is analogously transplanted, a brain is rewired, a brain is converted into a set of passages in a book, or a robot simulates a person. There is pervasive preoccupation with those organisms and machines which challenge our notions of what persons, thoughts, and minds are (and what they aren't): chimpanzees which talk or don't talk, bats which resemble or are different from human beings, computers, gods, robots, and even the grim products of attempts at genetic engineering.

One has the feeling that Ripley's Believe It Or Not, the proceedings of the National Academy of Science, the American Philosophical Society, and the latest science fiction thrillers have all been trapped between two covers.

DOES THIS *potpourri* add up to a clear set of messages? Hofstadter and Dennett seem to be making the following points:

1. Materialism has carried the day. There are no ghosts or spirits in the organism. And yet it is perfectly proper and scientifically respectable to talk about minds and selves.

2. It is possible to create machines which think. In fact, human beings may be considered such machines. The Turing test, where an observer must, in effect, judge whether he has been conversing with a computer or a person, serves as a fair measure of success in creating thinking machines.

3. An intelligent system, or machine, like a human being must be able to rearrange or "reconfigure" its thought processes.

4. The existence of minds is by no means restricted to certain arrangements of brain cells. For instance, computer programs can embody mental processes. What is critical for mental activity to occur is simply certain arrangements of elements.

5. The notion of mental representation is central in the cognitive sciences. A representation consists of structures that in some way can mirror the world and that can modify their modes of operation to reflect changes in the world. Thus a computer, but not a television set, qualifies as a representational system.

6. It is legitimate, though tricky, to talk of selves and consciousness in minds, be they organic or "merely" mechanical. Legitimate invocation of these attributes may occur when a representa-

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tional system achieves a certain level of complexity which includes the capacity to represent its own capacities and attributes. As essayist Richard Dawkins puts it, "perhaps consciousness arises when the brain's simulation of the world becomes so complex that it must include a model of itself."

7. Work in the cognitive sciences should incorporate various levels of analysis as well as the particular perspective from which a phenomenon is observed. In evaluating simulations of mental activity, for example, one needs to take into account such factors as the physical material out of which a simulation is constructed, the degree of accuracy of the simulation, the physical size of the simulation, the nature of the simulating mechanism, and the speed of that mechanism.

While these points come through with some regularity and clarity, Hofstadter and Dennett are also inveterate collectors of puzzles and paradoxes. Among those which they revisit are the tricks which language can play on an individual; the problems encountered when one shifts levels of analysis without being aware of it; the difference between internal consciousness (how one feels oneself) and external consciousness (the problem of the existence of "other minds"); the subtlety of the line between fictive and "real" states; and finally, the question of who creates—the scientist, the programmer, the novelist, or God.

THESE, THEN, are Hofstadter's and Dennett's preoccupations, their reasons for choreographing this book. Yet in fact it is not easy to figure out just where the editors stand on the issues, I have noted, which I had to extrapolate from the texts. For some reason, Hofstadter and Dennett are reluctant to put their cards on the table. The book is replete with disclaimers. We read "This thing speaks for itself." "It is hard to say." "We'll leave this one for you to ponder on." "Right or wrong, the ideas are worth thinking about." "We will leave answers implicit." Rather than succumbing to "handwaving" without evidence, Hofstadter and Dennett embrace the opposite sin of "headshaking."

Part of the problem may be ambivalence about audience. Naturally the editors want to reach the largest possible readership, but that is difficult to accomplish with a collection of this sort. Some of the work is conceptually quite challenging (for example, Turing's essay); a number of the commentaries presuppose or race rapidly through such redoubtable waters as quantum mechanics, thermodynamics, eigenstates, relativity, or genetics—hardly topics for the casual reader. I don't want to suggest that the book is solemn or overly technical; much of it is fun to read and highly provocative. Yet I suspect that few readers will be satisfied. The authors can't decide whether they are seducing bright freshmen or challenging advanced graduate students. Novices will fail to understand large sections of the text, while those steeped in the cognitive sciences will search in vain for original material.

JUST AS IT IS difficult to figure out what the editors wish to propound, it is difficult to ferret out what they are against. Despite their claim that they will offend both spiritualists and materialists, their discussions are, in fact, highly eclectic and catholic. There is no discussion of the philosophical objections which might still be raised against rampant mentalism, nor is there a critique of the artificiality of most research in contemporary experimental cognitive psychology. Indeed, the only place in the book where Hofstadter and Dennett give their own views is in their uncharacteristically lengthy and contentious reflection on John Searle's essay, "Minds, Brains and Programs." In this essay, Searle, a philosopher of language at the University of California at Berkeley, challenges the "strong" claims of the artificial intelligence movement. In his view, computer programs cannot legitimately be said to understand anything. He analogizes such programs to an individual who purports to understand Chinese. The individual proceeds by following a set of rules which tells him symbols should be "put out" in response to other symbols which have been furnished to him. In fact, of course, Searle's Chinese "pseudo-speaker" has no understanding whatsoever.

In Searle's view, "genuine" understanding can only emerge in organisms which have intentionality, and the ability to have and carry out intentions may depend on being a certain type of protoplasm. The notion that intelligence can be embodied in an artificial symbol-manipulating computer strikes Searle as absurd. This criticism obviously cuts to the heart of this collection and so Dennett and Hofstadter detail their grievances against Searle. But I must admit that I found Searle's presentation more compelling than Hofstadter and Dennett's various attempts to undercut it. Perhaps this is because, unlike Hofstadter and Dennett, Searle has minced no words in saying exactly where he stands on central issues in the cognitive sciences.

On the whole, then, incompleteness pervades the Hofstadter-Dennett collection. Certainly this smorgasbord is enjoyable to read and it is valuable to have these articles collected together. Moreover, Hofstadter and Dennett's own Socratic-style dialogues and reflections are among the very finest in the book. But the whole is not greater than the sum of its parts. In putting together such a collection, Hofstadter and Dennett have added to a pile of books of a kind that is becoming increasingly common: collections of provocative ideas which readers are expected to synthesize for themselves. Among recent instances in the behavioral and natural sciences, we have the books of Marshall McLuhan, Robert Ornstein, and Manfred Eigen and Ruthild Winkler. On rare occasions such a compilation can be successful: in his *Organization and Pathology of Thought* (1951), David Rapoport, the gifted clinical psychologist, wrestled with several texts by other authors and ended up producing a classic of his own. But most "readers" remain just that, not integrated works; and *The Mind's I* is simply not in Rapoport's class.

One underlying theme in this book is the question of what is special about the human mind. In my own view, the most magnificent and least replaceable aspects of human cognition are our creative and synthetic powers. What is most likely to elude the "science of the artificial" is the capacity to weave ideas together into an effective and rounded product: a poem, a story, a painting, a symphony, a well-argued book. Immanuel Kant underscored the relative difficulty of fashioning an original work when he commented,

We can readily learn all that Newton

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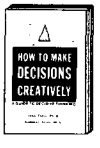

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has set forth in his immortal work on the Principles of Natural Philosophy, however great a head was required to discover it; but we cannot learn to write spirited poetry, however express may be the precepts of the art and however excellent its models.

Hofstadter and Dennett can rightly retort that this was not their intent. As they put it in a short prefatory note, "This book, then, is designed to provoke, disturb, and befuddle its readers." Moreover, they appear to anticipate the kind of reaction I have articulated here in a self-mocking comment: "Well, all of these fantasies have been fun, but they can't really tell us anything." The two compilers go on to urge that their collection of arguments and reveries is instructive and I agree. *The Mind's I* does tell us many things. But by abdicating the possibility of creating a genuinely novel synthesis, Hofstadter and Dennett have provided less than we have the right to expect from two such unusually talented cognitive scientists.

HOWARD GARDNER

Howard Gardner is a Boston research psychologist. His most recent book is *Artful Scribbles* (Basic Books).

THE WINE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Fish
by Monroe Engel

(Atheneum, 217 pp., $12.95)

What Henry James called "the imagination of disaster" is ours in abundance these days. Our fiction reflects it—reflects what is even more prevalent and alarming: the *habit* of the imagination of disaster. Yet, even in the midst of a darkness so comfortably established, there are, if one looks for them, glimmers of other visions from writers still prepared to consider our options afresh and still open to the possibility of grounds for hope. Among them is Monroe Engel in *Fish*, an unfashionably quiet and reflective novel. It is a work which is steadily, sharply—at times, almost microscopically—focused on the moral texture of the lives of its characters. And it is, on balance, hopeful—with limited, but entirely credible, hope.

I have hesitated before undertaking this review because Monroe Engel is no stranger to me. However, it strikes me as imperative that this novel not disappear without wider hearing than it has received. Therefore, let me declare at the outset that my several years of professional association with the author have included both agreement and disagreement on literary matters. It is to be hoped that such an association might assist my reading of the text. There also might well be interest, or prejudice. Let the reader be warned, but let me move on.

Harry Karp, teacher, divorced, a man in his early 40s, is protagonist and narrator of the tale. Nicknamed "Fish" by his friends, he is a floating presence, a perpetual spectator and classifier of impressions. His fluency is disturbing. Fish seems to be all visual gape—all eye and ruminative apparatus—but the world he observes and classifies seems rather insubstantial, weightless and frictionless, for he takes it in, digests it, reducing it to transparency all too easily. Indeed, the world Fish inhabits seems, at the start, little more than "a lacework of possibility"—a phrase he uses when speaking of a friend's house, which is framed but not yet boarded. The house is illustrative: although Fish gladly helps shingle it, he has watched it grow with a sharp sense of misgiving. "Now most of those possibilities have been foreclosed, and the large actual house that stands in their place also obscures a large piece of water. The difference feels bad to me."

Gretta London is marginally employed. She is also divorced, and has been awarded custody of her 12-year-old son, Michael, only on condition that both Michael and she remain under the supervision—it amounts to the custody—of her brother, Alfred. A doctor friend, Christine Kaplan, also takes on the mission of keeping a close eye on mother and son. What comes to light as the story unfolds are the more, and less, subtle forms of coercion exerted upon Gretta at every turn, under the guise of moral suasion.

Gretta is a onetime failed suicide, and her son is a diabetic, an unclear case, awaiting a clarifying crisis. Gretta mystifies Fish, resists assimilation; she enters a room, and his life, "like a multiple counterforce," bringing "heat," "noise," "disruption and contingency." Wholly capricious at first appearance, Gretta is revealed, as we come to know her better, as someone remarkably centered, dedicated to staying the course she has set for herself—preserving her son's freedom as long as possible, before he becomes medicated and an invalid for the rest of his life. Fish gradually becomes enlisted in her struggle.

It is, by any other name, a love story, but one in which the word "love" is never mentioned, and the actual seduction occurs almost by the way, overshadowed by more complicated involvements. A love story in which the heroine isn't young, beautiful, slim, unlined, or unencumbered. Solidity and encumbrance are—strange to say—the attractions. It is a book certain to be called "delicate," a misleading adjective suggesting pallor and faint energies. The more accurate word would be "intricate"—so intricately woven that one cannot pinpoint the decisive moment of commitment for Fish. Gretta's disappearances and sudden entrances are points along the way, as is his mysterious "cardiac clatter"—this last, "a preemptory sequence . . . an unrivaled reminder of the possibility of change." The book documents the transformation of Fish from spectator to agent, from a condition of unbounded, empty freedom, to freedom within limitations—freedom of purpose.

THE READER MAY encounter some difficulty in entering this novel—I did. The narrative is delivered in a voice so devoid of regional or personal coloration that it may be hard to credit it as a personal voice, issuing from a personal point of view. The objective tone, the steady, unremitting, cameralike tracking by the observing eye, the slow-motion registration of detail, are accurate reflections of Fish's chronic detachment—accurate and retrospectively jus-

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SOUTHERN VISION

Understandings by Paul Kwilecki

(University of North Carolina Press, 115 pp., $24.95)

During the summer of 1964, outside a freedom house established as a vanguard of the civil rights movement deep within Mississippi's Delta, a black resident of that state, himself disgusted with the prevailing segregationist climate in his home county (Sunflower), spoke of a future day: "The time will come when you outsiders will be long gone, and there will be just us, and we'll have to be taking our own stock, and be figuring out what we've got here that's good, and what's not so good."

At the time some Yankee activists were afraid that they were being told, tactfully, to go home—a measure of the strenuous fear a particularly endangered black community had every right to feel. But the speaker was aware that any outside intervention in a region, a nation, was only as valuable as its consequences. The South would have to generate its own kind of moral visionaries.

Not that the region hasn't for a long time done so—in a literary fashion. The South's writers have been, continue to be, a strong self-appraising element of our national consciousness. Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, Flannery O'Connor's backwoods country of preachers and heathens are each microcosms of 20th-century America, lost or foundering in some ways, quite sure of itself in other ways. Now comes a Georgia photographer, with whom it has been my privilege to work, whose pictures, surely, will help his fellow citizens understand not only a segment of the rural South, but also the various assumptions and preferences which, in their sum, characterize us as a people.

Paul Kwilecki is 53 years old. He was born in Bainbridge, Georgia, the town in which Decatur County's business is run. That county is located in extreme southwestern Georgia, nearer by far to Tallahassee, Florida, than to "northern bought" Atlanta, where Kwilecki lived for a few years while attending Emory University. Except for that interlude, he has lived all his life in Bainbridge, running a hardware store and doing what the black Mississippian mentioned above suggested ought be done, that is, looking hard and long at how a certain kind of life goes.

PHOTOGRAPH OF TWO TOBACCO WORKERS BY PAUL KWILECKI

In *Understandings: Photographs of Decatur County, Georgia*, Kwilecki's camera captures a rural South still strong on community feeling, family, local tradition, and religion. On the other hand, commerce binds us all together—brand names, automobiles, washing machines, and bus stations, where one prepares to leave for the beyond of big, strange cities. Kwilecki's photographs emphasize the ordinary routines of a particular everydayness: the doctor with his stethoscope around the neck; people entering or leaving stores; members of a band resting in between songs; hunting and fishing; shopping and driving and playing the jukebox and swimming and sitting and talking and running and having an ice-cream cone and making a phone call and filling the plate with food.

There are three sections that break with that unselfconscious flow in which we all immerse ourselves most of the time. In "Decatur County Courthouse" the power of the law comes across, even in empty rooms. The people suddenly appear grave, pensive, distracted. They are in trouble, or are kin to someone in trouble. In "Churches and Cemeteries" a similar weight falls upon the scene. Now people disappear and we are alone before God rather than the law. Some of these photographs are exceptionally powerful: a landscape of fragile yet strongly arresting country churches, and always, the mystery of the deep South, with its moss-laden trees and thick shrubbery—a brooding darkness which light enters warily. The last section, "Baptism," offers a brief three photographs of black people intensely serious about an ancient Christian rite. The devotion, the drama in these pictures! They tell us more about the heritage of blacks—about a struggle for purpose and meaning in this life waged over the centuries by a much abused but still proud and wise people—than readers are likely to find in dozens of thick and assertive textbooks given over to subjects such as "race" or "rural sociology" or "the South."

ROBERT COLES

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tified—but do nothing to ease or entice the reader into the book. Only at the end of what feels to be a very long first chapter, when Fish finds himself gripped by a "cold collar" at the sight of Gretta and Michael with their arms linked, did the story begin to take hold for me. This sudden, unclassified, gripping sensation has a dramatic disclosing effect, all the more dramatic and revealing for the studied neutrality which precedes it. But the reader has to get this far.

Another problem may be caused by the overexercise of one of the obvious virtues of the book: its poise. The difficulty arises in trying to understand what Fish means by "vagueing," and in fully believing that he is frightened by it. He describes the phenomenon with his usual facility:

> I head for the Square evenings when the weather is favorable and I have nothing better to do, to stop vagueing—or, preferably, to forestall it. By now, these chronic, accelerated slippages of attention from which you start with only a schematic notion—an outline deprived of detail—of what's been going on for the past ten, twenty, or thirty minutes scare the bejesus out of me. They aren't painful exactly, but I know that some kinds of internal hemorrhage are painless too and issue no warning until the bleeder discovers that what he thought was a bass drum thumping outside his window is actually his heart making do as it can with decreasing working supplies. And the analogy is reasonable.

But no scare shows through the nearly seamless control of this description. Even in his cardiac episodes, when Fish must suffer at least a moment of terror and disarray, the prose does not falter, but moves on with so settled a composure as to weaken the credibility of the experience described.

I was never able to catch Fish, still less the author, in the act of "vagueing" anywhere in the book. Of course, the reader is only present at the events which bring Gretta into Fish's life, and Fish himself into focus. And perhaps we are meant to understand Fish's habit of fine discrimination as his *antidote* to vagueing. His fondness for exacting manual tasks also might be viewed as counteraction. Still, the only evidence that Fish actually does blink off, ever, is the scar from a past automobile accident.

What Fish suffers from in the reader's presence might, rather, be called "peripheral precision," an anxious skewing of focus, a sliding vision, always a little to the side of the main action. His perceptions may not add up at first, but they are always clear and meticulously detailed, never vague.

Unblinking attentiveness is, indeed, Fish's distinctive quality, and the very distinction of this novel. So much so that it doesn't seem out of place to echo James once again, and to say that here is a novel "filled to the brim with the wine of consciousness." This doesn't mean that everything is analyzed away in the end. There remains a residuum of mystery and it is, wisely, left untouched. I am thinking, for example, of the night scene, wherein a shorebound Fish watches Gretta swimming in the ocean. He can see

> only the spectral cap, weightless and frictionless, drawn along the surface by a largely invisible, seemingly inexhaustible, reciprocating machine. Only for the short time she's passing in front of me does this become two arms whose fullness and weight are sheathed in immaterial brightness, and whose regular alternation begins to seem an appalling exercise of secrecy.

There is mystery, beauty, here—but no fading.

A. G. MOJTABAI

A. G. Mojtabai is currently a Guggenheim Fellow. Her novels include: *Mundome, The 400 Eels of Sigmund Freud,* and *A Stopping Place,* all published by Simon and Schuster, and the forthcoming *Autumn,* to be published by Houghton Mifflin.

COMING:
Maureen Howard on
Clare Booth Luce.

THE RED BLUES

Russian Journal
by Andrea Lee

(Random House, 239 pp., $13.50)

In the six decades since the 1917 Revolution there must have been at least a hundred books by Western visitors describing "my stay in the Soviet Union"—and the vast majority fall into one of two distinct categories. On the one hand, there is that type of book so popular in the 1930s and 1940s, written by eager enthusiasts for whom the "great Soviet experiment" was a paradise in the making. Today their books seem mere historical curiosities, thin, two-dimensional testaments to the illusions of yesteryear. On the other hand, right from the beginning, there has been another kind of book about the Soviet Union. These are the ones written by authors who have managed to respond in an entirely personal way to what they encountered, seeing life in the USSR in a human, individual light, rather than through the eyes of heroic collectivism. It would be hard to imagine a less stereotyped collection of books than, say, H.G. Wells's *Russia in the Shadows* (1920), Malcolm Muggeridge's *Winter in Moscow* (1933), Laurens van der Post's *Journey into Russia* (1964), or George Feifer's *Message from Moscow* (1969)—but here too a kind of fascinating pattern emerges in the way these very different people wrote about their experiences.

Initially, each of these authors was exhilarated by the sheer strangeness and scale of life in Russia: it is so much stranger and more puzzling than anything one can have been led to expect. They then begin to draw an ever-widening distinction between the people of Russia, often so warm and attractive, so clearly defined as individuals—and the extraordinary, all-pervading system they live under, so incomparably more oppressive than the average Westerner can begin to conceive. When they fi-

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nally depart, almost all are amazed at the lifting of their spirits as they leave Russian soil, a sense, as Van der Post puts it, of being "almost giddy with lack of ballast." But at the same time they return to the West feeling that they have been through an experience almost impossible to communicate. In some way they have left behind an important part of themselves in that eerie country, where one's personal contacts take on such intensity, and where life has briefly seemed so much more serious an affair than it often does in the dissipated, self-indulgent air of the West.

SUCH, I CONFESS, has been my own experience of visiting the Soviet Union, which is why I feel so warmly toward this second groups of books, and why I welcome Andrea Lee's *Russian Journal* as a distinguished addition to their number. When Ms. Lee and her husband, a Harvard doctoral candidate in Russian history, arrived in the autumn of 1978 for ten months of study, they were shown up to their small apartment in the huge "Stalinist Gothic" skyscraper of Moscow State University. On that first evening Ms. Lee saw a young student chasing a girl with long braids round a courtyard, with peals of laughter. "I felt disarmed and curiously moved. I realized that nothing this year would be predictable or easy to follow." Thus the book opens on precisely the right note. That is how one does (or should) feel on one's first day in the Soviet Union, and from there Ms. Lee scarcely puts a foot wrong.

One of her strengths is that she does not attempt any sweeping analysis of Soviet life or "the Russian character." She keeps strictly within the compass of describing only the people she meets and what she sees. But how well she observes and records it all! The book is made up of some 35 almost self-contained vignettes, some only a page or two long. We meet Grigorii, the overfriendly fellow-student who materializes as soon as they arrive, and is obviously their own personal *stukach* or "informer," commissioned to watch them by some nameless power in the background. There is Sasha, the photographer, obsessively building up his store of English from a cherished Webster's Dictionary—"my wife, she is not encouraging to my studies. In fact she is a hellcat, a termagant." There is Seryozha, darkly handsome and blue-blooded, like some throwback to the world of Lermontov, who is becoming more and more enmeshed in a web of trouble involving his estranged wife, her parents, and the KGB. There is Rima, who lives in an overcrowded flat with "her parents, her ex-husband and her daughter by the ex-husband" and perilously survives on a succession of little deals—icons, illegal currency exchanges, English lessons to diplomats. There is the brave, forlorn little group of Russian "hippies," with their smattering of out-of-date slang ("I dig you the most"), defiantly standing out in that outwardly drab, conformist culture like ghosts of the American 1960s.

As these typical Moscow figures float out of the pages we get a strong sense of private Moscow life: the intense, often rather surreal conversations, the cramped apartments, the vodka and plates of black bread and *zakuski*. We pass through scenes other visitors have described before—the colorful hubbub of the "free enterprise" peasant food markets (without which, despite their high prices, the whole Soviet experiment would long since have come to an end); the *banya* or public bath house, full of giggling Muscovite women letting their hair down like children; the packed and deeply moving Easter service, a church full of candles and beautiful singing, with a row of thugs at the door—but always Ms. Lee find something fresh to add.

Some things she does are open to few foreigners, such as her visit to the dusty little half-forgotten Caucasian town where Stalin's birthplace, a tiny cottage, is preserved under a tasteless marble canopy, and the town square still displays a statue of Stalin, almost certainly the only one (apart from the bust over his grave) still on show in the USSR. Even more exceptionally, as university students, she and her husband (and a "worker" friend Petya) march in the great May Day parade through Red Square itself, catching a rare close-up glimpse of Brezhnev and other members of the Politburo ("they really do exist . . . how little they are, and how tired!").

The dark, oppressive underside of Soviet life is constantly present in the background, but all the more forcefully

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Inside Russian Medicine: An American Doctor's First-Hand Report by William A. Knaus

(Everest House, 416 pp., $14.95)

For decades, the Soviet health care system was one of the few things a Russian felt he could boast about to an American. The statistics are still impressive. By 1983 the USSR will have 1.2 million physicians, or one doctor for every 220 Soviet citizens. (The American ratio is 1:450.) The Soviet Union has twice as many hospital beds as the United States. Every year, one out of every four Soviet citizens can expect to receive hospital care. The bright picture painted by those officially released statistics has been accepted, for the most part, by Americans. The general feeling in this country is that health care is the one area in which the Soviet Union has surpassed the United States.

Over the last few years, however, another set of statistics has been pieced together. The situation they reveal is a good deal more painful, and far murkier, than the official numbers would have us believe. During the 1970s the Soviet Union became the first industrialized nation to suffer a marked long-term rise in its infant mortality rate, and the USSR's rate of infant deaths now stands at about triple the U.S. rate. But it is not just Soviet babies who are worse off: during the last few years, so many Soviet men died while relatively young that male life expectancy dropped from 66 years to 63 years.

Armed with his knowledge of Russian and his experience as a Foreign Service medical officer assigned to the Soviet Union, William Knaus, now a co-director of the intensive care unit at the George Washington University, set out to explore this paradoxical world where the infant mortality rate climbs along with the number of doctors. From an American perspective, the world Knaus describes is one of ersatz medicine, where a hospital might employ a man for the sole task of fluffing patients' pillows even as the floors of that hospital's bathrooms are covered with "a sticky mixture of urine and feces," and where a doctor is forced to amputate rather than repair a boy's leg because no one has sent him vascular sutures.

But the Soviet government takes a different view. Just as in Stalinist economics bread is an intermediate good and steel the final goal, so in Soviet medicine the emphasis is not on the interests of the individual but on those of "society." Whatever one thinks of the Soviet decision to favor "society," it must be noted that the health care system was largely successful until about 1970. Epidemic disease was eliminated, death rates fell, and Soviet citizens began to die of industrialized man's killers, heart disease and cancer.

Since then, however, something has gone haywire. Knaus reports the scary statistics on, say, abortion—an average of six per woman per lifetime, with some women reporting as many as 24—but he does not venture to speculate on just what they mean, or what they portend for the future of Soviet society. Perhaps because he is a teaching doctor, he treats each topic as though it were a case encountered on his rounds, to be discussed and then dropped as the doctor and his students move on to the next item. Thus we are informed that the Soviets call alcoholism "the third disease," that the USSR (even with all its teetotaling Muslims) leads the world in per capita consumption of hard liquor, that taxes on alcohol account for 12 percent of the government's revenues, and that the average Soviet family spends from a quarter to a half of its food budget on alcohol. Knaus goes on to quote a Russian physician—"Lenin said that either socialism will defeat the louse or the louse will defeat socialism. The threat is the same today, only the problem is not lice—it's vodka"—and then leaves the subject. If something has indeed gone very wrong, he does not tell us what he thinks it might be.

Because they so often involve vital matters, failures in health care seem to crystallize the failures of a society. In both the United States and the USSR, there are people whose needs are not met by the system. In this country, there are those who stay away from the doctor for fear of being pauperized; in the Soviet Union, such a person is free to go to the doctor, only to find that a bankrupt system cannot provide for him.

The contrast between failures is striking: while technology-happy American doctors will run something like nine billion lab tests in 1982, the Soviet health care system is characterized by former Minister of Health Boris Petrovsky's complaint that 75 percent of all Soviet-made X-ray film is unusable. While U.S. doctors prowl for the latest high-tech toy, Soviet doctors cautiously govern their hospitals with rules developed during the epidemics of the 1930s, and on the belief that infections *always* come from outside the hospital. While American physicians earn an average net income of nearly $70,000 a year, their Soviet counterparts receive less than factory hands—but while American patients can sue their doctors for malpractice, Soviet citizens have no such means of achieving satisfaction.

In health care, at least, there appears to be no sort of U.S.-USSR "convergence" on the horizon. Our problem is how to handle our technology, but the Soviets' problem is not how to get more technology. CAT scanners do little to cure alcoholism; all that is needed to clear up the rickets so often associated with Soviet infant mortality is the vitamin D found in milk. These are not problems created or cured by doctors—they are afflictions brought on by the political system. Soviet alcoholism seems to be a kind of self-administered Stalinization; to cut back on vodka consumption would deprive the people of the liquid policeman that keeps them quiet.

TOM RICKS

Tom Ricks has written for the *Wilson Quarterly*, the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, and TNR. He is now working with Nick Eberstadt on a study of the Soviet Union.

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for being so understated. There is a marvelously observed description of a *Beriozka*, one of the brightly lit "hard currency" shops for foreigners, packed with food, drink, and other items never available on the drab, sparsely stocked shelves of the shops open to ordinary Soviet citizens. (An old woman sneaks past the guard at the door just to gaze for a wondering moment at this forbidden Aladdin's cave.) There is the constant, revealing fascination with all things Western and American—in particular, as Ms. Lee so shrewdly pinpoints, with that now almost

> lost America that Russians seem most to admire, though they denounce it: the dream landscape made up of our big cars, big wasteful meals, sprawling suburbs, tough military stance.

There is the official terror of the slightest signs of disorder or spontaneity (one of the things which made the 1980 Olympics so joyless)—as when on May Day Andrea and her husband go up onto the Lenin Hills with Petya to watch a fireworks display, and find that they are brusquely corralled into a tiny, tightly guarded stockade. Even the loyal Petya has to remark, "It embarrasses me to have you see that. Our government is awfully afraid of riots, you see. People gathered together make revolutions, and we can't have another of those."

MS. LEE REALLY does write well. She sees with what one would be tempted to call a novelist's eye (if only our present-day novelists observed so sharply). For example, she describes "a strapping British girl who kept tossing her head with the dangerous coquetry of women who live in foreign outposts where they have been given exaggerated notions of their own charms." Some of the longer of her "episodes" read like short stories, such as the moving profile of Ibrahim, a proud, sad Ethiopian, brought to Moscow like so many of his young countrymen to be educated as a loyal Marxist, who has conceived such a passionate hatred of the Soviet Union that he wishes only to return home to fight with the anti-Soviet Eritrean nationalists. His brother has already died in this cause, and when he has asked in a session of "table-tapping" to speak to his brother's ghost, the answer to his unspoken question comes back, "Death." What did you ask, a girl timidly enquires. "I asked my brother what I could expect when I get home."

There are only two characters in the book whom Ms. Lee calls by their real names, both well known, and the chapters that describe them are among the most memorable. Many things have been written about Victor Louis, the mysterious Russian "correspondent" for various Western papers, who lives in amazing style and luxury in a *dacha* outside Moscow, but the description here of how Andrea and her husband go out to spend Christmas day with Louis and his upper middle-class British wife Jennifer is superb. They sense how beneath the casual surface, their every word is being listened to (when Andrea mentions some Russian friend, Jennifer is quick to ask exactly where he lives). "We may have left Russia," thought Andrea as they returned that night to Moscow, "but we certainly moved a lot closer to the heart of the Kremlin."

The other splendid description is of a chance meeting in Leningrad with Tikhon Khrennikov, the unspeakable chairman of the Union of Soviet Composers, whom they watch self-importantly drinking soup in a smart restaurant, and who grandly invites them to a premiere of some of his music—which "showed the influence of Brahms and Tchaikovsky as a small, barren planet might reflect the light of the stars."

In common with so many of her predecessors, Ms. Lee finally records how, as they left Soviet soil after ten months, she and her husband felt an extraordinary elation. But they had undoubtedly left behind some part of themselves with the unforgettable people of that deeply poignant land—with Rima, the professional "go between"; with Seryozha, who friends later reported had "disappeared"; even with Grigorii the "informer," who makes his last appearance in these pages taking them out onto the Lenin Hills, in his "bureaucrat's suit," to hear nightingales.

> Grigorii removed his comical taped glasses and unashamedly wiped his eyes. He admits that he has a tape-recording of nightingale song which he plays when he is alone. 'It makes me think of spring and the forest.'

What a country!

CHRISTOPHER BOOKER

Christopher Booker writes for the *Spectator*, and is the author of *The Games War: A Moscow Journal* (Faber & Faber).

BRIEF REVIEWS

The Germans by Gordon H. Craig

(Putnam, 350 pp., $15.95)

When it comes to Germans and Germany, historians, social philosophers, and writers lose the connecting thread between the monstrous and the reasonable and fall into a pit of clichés about Wagner and Hitler, Beethoven and Buchenwald, militarism and authoritarianism. Not so Gordon A. Craig, who looms like a placid giant among writers on the German psyche and soul. Author of the highly acclaimed and authoritative *Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640–1945* (1955), Craig shows his passionate insightfulness again with the publication of *The Germans*, a companion volume to his monumental *Germany: 1866–1945*.

Both in *Germany* and in the new *The Germans*, Craig challenges the positions of several German historians, including that of Friedrich Meinecke, who dismissed Hitler as an "accident," a German "not of our own race." Meinecke saw Hitler as a "demonist" personality who was the sole cause of all the horrors of 1933 through 1945. Marxists and leftist historians, meanwhile, have contended that Hitler was a ridiculous man in the grip of historical forces he could not control. Craig destroys both myths in *The Germans*, pointing out, contra-Meinecke, that Hitler was in fact representative of German romanticism, nationalism, and intolerance; and arguing against the left that there would have been no Nazi movement or regime and none of the historical consequences of those facts without Hitler.

I have not read a better brief explanation of the Germans and Jews than Craig's analysis, which is actually a comparison of the German-Jewish relationship to Edgar Allan Poe's story "William Wilson." Wilson is a man with a schoolmate of the same name and appearance who is almost his double. The two are so close that a feeling of "petulant animosity" develops, along with feelings of esteem and respect; each feels a fear, a vexation, grow stronger with every circumstance that tends to show resemblance, moral and physical, between his rival and himself. The feel-

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ings harden into hatred until Wilson kills his double. Craig makes an unusual and original analogy:

> The family resemblance between the two people is striking and is evident in their industry, their thrift and frugality, their perserverance, their strong religious sense, the importance of family and their common respect for the printed word, which had made the Jews the People of the Book and the Germans *das Volk der Dichter und Denken*.

This is brilliant but perhaps a little too neat. There is a hint of self-murder in the Poe story, but in historical fact the Germans simply murdered the Jews.

Craig's book of course goes beyond the German-Jewish question. He deals with soldiers (and who knows this subject better than Craig), women, religion, and other modern German themes. The section on "Berlin: Athens on the Spree and City of Crisis" is nostalgic and evocative, a past-and-present tour from an expert guide. *The Germans* is free-wheeling, surprisingly entertaining for a scholarly book, and extremely eloquent.

AMOS PERLMUTTER

Amos Perlmutter is the author recently of *Modern Authoritarianism: A Comparative Institutional Analysis* (Yale University Press).

The Mosquito Coast by Paul Theroux

(Houghton Mifflin, 374 pp. $13.95)

The Mosquito Coast is a seemingly straightforward adventure story which ends with a splotch of *Lord of the Flies*-like horror and which trails clouds of dark parable behind it. I think children would like it; the whole novel, which is told by a 13 year old, would enact their fantasies, and they would be agreeably scared by the gruesome end. As for adults, they can enjoy it on a more complex level, since there is an ambiguous interpretive distance between the tale and its young teller. In fact, the novel is made to order for a structuralist analysis of the tension between its story and its narrative commentary, which is to say the contrast between our perspective on the events and that of Charlie Fox, the young narrator.

Like anything by Paul Theroux, moreover, *The Mosquito Coast* is a delight to read. Theroux is a master storyteller; he writes as if E. M. Forster's rueful "Yes, oh dear yes, the novel must tell a story," was his motto, and nothing to be ashamed of either. And he writes uncommonly well. There are wonderfully exotic words here, as well as familiar words in fresh contexts, and metaphors you want to savor. Theroux tries to make the narrative voice that of a 13-year-old, but you have only to compare Charlie Fox's prose persona to Huck Finn's to see how far he fails. Charlie is a touch literary. But if his voice isn't credible, his innocence is, and that is the main thing.

The central character—and he is a character—is an eccentric inventor named Allie Fox. Tired of the "awfulness of America"—"how it got turned into a dope-taking, door-locking, ulcerated danger zone of rabid scavengers and criminal millionaires and moral sneaks. And look at the politicians. And look at the schools. . . "—Allie Fox takes his wife and four children to the Mosquito Coast of Honduras, where he builds a giant ice-making machine in the jungle. In parody of the conquistadors, who brought religion at the point of a sword, Allie brings ice and an intimidating energy to the torpid Indians and mixed-race Hondurans. Why ice? Because it's variously useful, and as he tells a young Honduran,

> It doesn't occur naturally on the Mosquito coast, so it's the beginning of perfection in an imperfect world. It makes sense of work. It's free. It's even pretty. It's civilization.

Like Conrad's Kurtz, he takes the wilderness as "a personal challenge, something that could be put right with an idea or a machine." And like Kurtz, his mania to create his own world exalts, blinds, and destroys him.

To the adult reader, Allie Fox is a crazed bore and know-it-all, who tells a ship's captain how to sail and the natives how to survive in the jungle (whose every slither and shriek Theroux captures with astonishing ease). But to Charlie, his father is brave, tireless, and inexhaustibly clever, a figure of towering and total authority. After Allie comes a cropper in the jungle, however, a reversal of sympathies takes place, with Charlie starting to see him as fallible, and even pitiable, just as we come to admire the way trouble steels his stubborn will. His failure makes him moving to us, a Lear without his kingdom, and though it shocks his son, it also gives him room to be himself.

Beneath its adventure story surface, *The Mosquito Coast* has big things on its mind. At home with paradox, it is about civilization as a savage will to dominance (and yet it defends civilization against nature, red in tooth and claw), about order as anarchy, about the admirable energy and malign motives of invention, about fantasy as tyranny and fiction as spurious power. It is about the way fathers hide their real purposes from their sons, and sons hide their wishes from themselves.

The Mosquito Coast is, I think, finally more interesting than affecting, but then I expect its real force is reserved for teenagers. For, professing his innocence every step of the way, Charlie Fox pushes his father aside—this modern *Swiss Family Robinson* is a displaced dream of parricide. The kids should love it.

JACK BEATTY

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

If Kennedy thought the Army was too small at 965,000, I wonder what he would have thought 20 years later? It now stands at 775,000, according to the current *Military Balance* from the prestigious London International Institute of Strategic Studies, and almost all other categories of U.S. military strength have been similarly reduced to the same dangerously low levels over the past dozen years.

Mr. Reagan is right on his more general point: U.S. military strength has been woefully weak in all previous cases when Presidents have thought it necessary to try to use it. The real question is whether there will once again be time to remobilize when a Commander in Chief faces this dreadful decision.

Vincent Davis
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky

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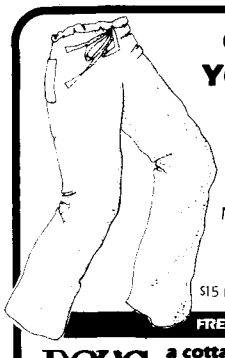

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Hard Hearts

"WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE do for fun in Washington?" a TNR colleague asked a few of us awhile back. It seemed an odd question to ask in this town. Men and women in their twenties and thirties do not think of themselves as young, nor do they think of fun, with its fleeting rewards, as something worth having. In fact, while the middle-aged cling to the fantasy that youth is a time of freedom and high spirits, many members of the so-called younger generation are deeply into premature senescence. The age of Washington's young professionals often can be determined by little more than the year of their birth. Their faces are pasty from 12-hour days at the office; their bones crack when they rise from their desks; they tap their feet with impatience when the bus is late. These young men and women, like retirees, have made their daily routines into fanatically observed rituals. "Here for your morning constitutional?" an octogenerian asked me pleasantly one morning as I stopped at the shallow end of the pool to catch my breath. Oldsters are maligned for their tedious recounting of bodily ills—their graphic descriptions of gouty legs, faulty pacemakers, and rebellious digestive systems. But these monologues don't approach the morbid fascination with which young white-collar workers discuss their job-related nervous afflictions: facial tics, heartburn, insomnia, and bruxism. One friend was warned by his dentist that if he didn't wear a brux bar at night, he'd be toothless by the time he was forty.

A NEW COMPANY has opened up just outside the city. It is run by David Mullen, a 28-year-old former editor and writer at an aviation association, who saw that he could turn a profit by exploiting the callousness of his peers. Mullen represents a new wave in the florist business. He calls his service Flowers of Extinction. As Stephanie Mansfield reports in the *Washington Post*, this outfit will send a dozen dead roses or rotting tulips, along with a barbed limerick, to that dreary hanger-on who refuses to believe that he is unloved—all for the modest fee of $15. Mullen was quick to discover that singles here are a heartless lot. They guard their solitude with ferocity, and tire of their companions as quickly as they do their jobs. Mullen composes custom-made rhymes for each client. (He now averages about twenty customers a day and employs three people full-time.) A typical example:

> A person of knowledge and culture you can be
> Boring on any subject, that's what I see
> You're full of actions that often do peeve
> Only interesting to a point—the point when you leave
> You never open your mouth unless you've nothing to say
> So please get out of my life—forever to stay.

Mullen, who perhaps left his writing job for good reason, says that it's all in good fun. And even if the recipient might be offended, he makes his customers happy. They see the service as a cheap, effective, and amusing way to solve a nagging problem. He expects to do a thriving business on Valentine's Day.

OUTSIDERS OFTEN HAVE the impression that nothing is taken more seriously in Washington than politics. They are wrong. The subject that arouses real passion and loyalty is softball. In the dead of winter, between drafting budget legislation and gearing up for the debate over busing and school prayer, softball team captains have already begun vigorously recruiting members for the new season. The Hill's internal newspaper, *Roll Call*, reports that the Lungren-Sensenbrenner Cannonballs, determined to make the A-League this summer, have just hired two staffers whose skills on the field are probably more thoroughly tested than their administrative abilities. The new receptionist in Representative Lungren's office, a fellow Californian, is "an all-star softball hurler from the Long Beach City League" (league rules stipulate that the pitcher must be a woman); the new legislative correspondent in Representative Sensenbrenner's office played varsity baseball for the University of Wisconsin, and proved himself last summer playing center field as an intern. The champions of last year's B-League playoffs, Biaggi's Bronx Bombers, are recruiting new members as well, although B-League and C-League teams generally take the games a shade less seriously. Within two months the Mall will be transformed: by midafternoon on warm spring days, interns and "nonessential staffers" will be planted on their favorite diamonds, wielding baseball bats at those who threaten to usurp the field. Once the playing is underway in earnest, frailer players beware: brawny A-Leaguers have been known to break legs when they slide into base.

LAST DECEMBER the Senate Finance Committee furtively passed a generous tax relief plan for members of Congress—at the same time that many of those members were trying to convince President Reagan that his tax relief plan for the haves of the private sector would result in yawning deficits. The rationale behind Senator Ted Stevens's original bill last September was that Congressmen, like businessmen, should be allowed to deduct their living expenses while they are away from home. And as Michael Deaver says, in Washington it's tough to make ends meet on a measly $60,000 a year. So when it was discovered that Stevens's measure applied only to those few members who are single or whose families live in their home states, new clauses were added. Now all members are permitted to increase the allowable deduction for expenses from the present $3,000 to more than $20,000, even though the original justification no longer holds—since most of them live year-round in Washington. They can either itemize expenses such as meals, lodging, laundry, housecleaning, and local transportation, or choose a less bothersome blanket deduction of $75 for each day they are required to be in Washington. The bill includes a mathematical formula which shows that although Congress was in session 165 days in 1981, the number of "congressional days" a member can compute in his deduction is 265. At $75 per diem, this comes to $19,875. There were no hearings and little debate about the proposals. After some irate citizens wrote in to complain, the IRS scheduled its own hearings, but in the meantime, members will be able to tot up their new exemptions on their 1981 tax returns. Despite the Reagan budget, the safety net is in excellent repair where our legislators are concerned. This is bound to come as a relief to compassionate citizens everywhere.

D. W.

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